

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



3 1761 04051 5611



JOHN M. KELLY LIBRARY



Donated by
**The Redemptorists of
the Toronto Province**
from the Library Collection of
Holy Redeemer College, Windsor

University of
St. Michael's College, Toronto

Compliments of the
Sisters of our Lady of
Charity, Main St
Buffalo. N. Y.

VENERABLE
PÈRE EUDES
AND HIS WORKS



VENERABLE PÈRE EUDES

AND HIS WORKS

1601-1901

BY

P. A. PINAS, EUDIST

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY A
RELIGIOUS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY

PRIVATELY PRINTED BY
T. AND A. CONSTABLE, EDINBURGH

1903



P R E F A C E

THE VENERABLE PÈRE EUDES, whom, we hope, the Church will not delay to raise to our altars, is, without doubt, one of the most remarkable men of the seventeenth century. An indefatigable missionary, during sixty years he laboured to combat religious ignorance and immorality. A declared enemy of Jansenism, with all the energy of his faith he fought against this fatal error. By the work of Seminaries for which he founded his Congregation, and by his writings, true treasure of piety and doctrine, he courageously undertook the reformation of the clergy. Finally, in founding the Order of Our Lady of Charity, he opened numerous asylums for weak and strayed souls.

Let us add that few men have urged, as far as he has, the practice of every Christian and sacerdotal virtue. But, notwithstanding all his

works and merits, his name, his life, and his labours have remained in oblivion.

We wish that a complete and well studied life of this great servant of God would at length make him known and render apparent the influence which he exercised in his time, and which he still exercises even in our days by his different institutions.

Many authors, PP. Costil, Hérambourg, Le Beurier, Martine, De Montigny, and M. de Montzey, have left us interesting studies of the life, works, and virtues of Père Eudes. But all these works are incomplete; they are only sketches without colouring which demand a more skilful hand. We mentioned in a first edition that we had no intention of making up this deficiency, and of offering a complete portrait of the venerable apostle. Time and knowledge are wanting to us for such an undertaking. Our only aim is to trace a simple sketch, and to give in this small popular life an idea of the works and virtues of the V. P. Eudes, too little known. Soon, we hope, a pen better exercised if not more devoted than ours, will take in hand to give in full light the sweet sketch of

this great and holy person. In this new edition we have added the history up to the present day of each of the works established by the V. P. Eudes.

Thus, this small work is divided into two parts :
I. The V. P. Eudes and his works from 1601 to the French Revolution; II. V. P. Eudes and his works from the French Revolution to our days.

N.B.—To conform to the laws of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, we declare that the term ‘saint,’ given to the V. P. Eudes, or the word ‘miracles,’ attributed to his intercession, be taken in a general sense, and not in the strict acceptation, which the infallible judgment of the Church alone can authorise.

CONTENTS

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
EARLY YEARS OF JEAN EUDES (1601-1603) . . .	1

CHAPTER II.

MISSIONS OF P. EUDES (1631-1675), . . .	18
---	----

CHAPTER III.

FOUNDATION OF SEMINARIES, . . .	31
---------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

INSTITUTE OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY (1641-1792), . .	40
---	----

CHAPTER V.

CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY (1643-1792), . .	57
<i>b</i>	ix

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VI.

	PAGE
INSTITUTION AND PROPAGATION OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY (1641-1792), . . .	65

CHAPTER VII.

THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART, . . .	79
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

WRITINGS OF P. EUDES—HIS LAST YEARS, . . .	89
--	----

CHAPTER IX.

VIRTUES OF P. EUDES,	98
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER X.

CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY FROM 1680 TO THE REVOLUTION,	150
--	-----

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY IN THE NINE- TEENTH CENTURY,	161
--	-----

CHAPTER II.

INSTITUTE OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,	198
--	-----

CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER III.

	PAGE
VENERABLE MOTHER MARY OF SAINT EUPHRASIA PEL-	
LETIER, AND OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD	
SHEPHERD OF ANGERS,	213

CHAPTER IV.

MIRACLES AND CAUSE OF THE BEATIFICATION OF THE	
V. P. EUDES,	240

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS OF JEAN EUDES

(1601-1603)

THE traveller who visits Lower-Normandy finds, not far from Argentan, in the diocese of Séez, an old and modest church hidden amongst trees. It is the parish church of Ri, almost such as it existed three hundred years ago. Five or six yards from it, is a house not less ancient, overgrown with ivy, in which lived, at the end of the sixteenth century, a humble doctor named Isaac Eudes.¹ Having begun his studies with a view to the ecclesiastical state, he changed his resolution when the plague took away his brothers. But he remained not less firm in his religious convictions, and so faithful to the exercises of religion, that, after the example of the ministers of religion, he recited the breviary every day. And whilst he lavished his care on the bodily comfort of the sick, he gave them with zeal and prudence excellent counsels for the good of their souls. His virtuous wife, worthy of him, Martha Corbin, was

¹ At the end of the fifteenth century at least, Ri was the dwelling-place of the Eudes family, whose religious sentiments were hereditary, for we find on the register of the notary in 1527, Jehan Eudes, curate of Ri, and native of this parish.

gifted with a sound judgment and decided character, whose characteristic energy is shown by the following anecdote. One of her relations having been killed in a duel, the case was about to be brought before the courts, when Martha, to stop the scandal and avoid the shame which she feared for her family, made use of a clever and daring stratagem. The same evening she caused the body to be buried in one of her fields, which she ordered to be ploughed during the night. When, next morning, the royal officers presented themselves for legal statements, they were disconcerted and had to abandon an impossible search.

Having been married three years, and grieved at not having children, they promised by vow to make a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame-de-Recouvrance in the parish of Tourailles, if God would bless their union with a family.¹

Their prayer was heard, and both hastened to fulfil this promise. The 14th November 1601 a son was born to them, who received at baptism the name of Jean. It is of this child of benediction, this child of prayer, of whom we have to speak. He was the eldest of a large family, four sisters and two

¹ Crowds of the faithful visit Notre-Dame-de-Recouvrance in its little dell of Tourailles, and at the present time a pretty church, after the style of the fourteenth century, is being built, to replace the poor shed attached to the church under which the statue was sheltered. The right transept of this church will be reserved for P. Eudes, when the Church has raised him to our altars.

brothers. By his work Isaac Eudes was able to rear all his children and procure for them a good education. His fortune was very slender. In the parish he only possessed a few acres of ground at a place called the Mézerai and at Val-d'Houai.

The second of his sons, Francis Eudes, became celebrated under the title of Mézerai. Secretary to the French Academy, a distinguished writer, he has made himself a name by his 'History of France.'

The third, Charles Eudes, surnamed d'Houai, though less known, by his devotedness and firmness rendered eminent services at Argentan, where he exercised the profession of surgeon. In 1638 the plague made frightful ravages there, and gave him an opportunity of displaying his zeal. The desolation was extreme, says a chronicler of the time, and such as was never seen by the most aged. In the faubourg Saint-Thomas, every one died, or was abandoned to the care of the masters of the Fontenelle, and Bordeaux, with the wife of the said Bordeaux. The principal streets were overgrown with grass, there was no thoroughfare; almost the only living individual that passed through the square was the physician, M. Charles Eudes, master of Houay, brother of the 'Mézerai', and of Père Eudes, who came to seek remedies at the house of Bordeaux, which were left for him in a street or in a cart, which the sick and dying took away. If Charles d'Houai distinguished himself as a doctor, he was not the less held in estimation as alderman

of the town whose interests he looked after energetically.

The Count of Grancey, governor of Argentan, had purposed to demolish its walls, and bring about attacks and plunder on the inhabitants. Arrived at the foot of the tower 'Horloge,' the workmen were in the act of pulling it down. The people murmured, desiring to preserve this curious monument, the more so as it contained a valuable bell given by Mary of Spain in 1378. The governor would listen to nothing, and commanded the tower to be overthrown like the rest. The aldermen dared not resist a marshal of France. One of them, however, Charles d'Houai, inveighed against their innovations. 'Where do you come from?' exclaimed the raging count, and who are you to oppose my orders?' 'We are three brothers,' answers the modest doctor, 'adorers of the truth, the first preaches it, the second writes it, and I shall defend it till my last breath.' The tower was spared, and it was only in 1727 that it was demolished.

But let us return to the one who is to occupy our attention henceforth.

Jean Eudes, who, from his birth had been consecrated to Mary, and who, in the designs of God, was to become a brilliant light in the Church, distinguished himself in his childhood by his modesty, his piety, and his devotion to Our Blessed Lady. His natural inclination for virtue, strengthened by the spirit of faith that reigned in his family, as also

by the advice and example of the best of mothers, inspired this child with an intense horror of all that would tarnish the purity of his soul, and with an ardent love for Jesus and Mary. His greatest happiness was to pray before the altar. In the church of Ri, the pillar is still to be seen, behind which he loved to retire, and sometimes forgot himself, till his mother, uneasy at his disappearance, surprised him. Happy mother who found soil so well prepared for the seed of faith and virtue!

Jean Eudes was not yet nine years old when he gave a wonderful example of sweetness. One of his young companions, Desdiguers, in a moment of impatience struck him on the cheek. Jean, whose pious mother had often quoted the precept of the Gospel, immediately cast himself on his knees: 'Strike the other,' he said. The insulter blushed, and ashamed of his cowardly act, stole away.

The child, though not of a hardy constitution, grew and advanced in age. His father was anxious to instruct him, but was too much occupied by the duties of his profession, and was satisfied with putting him under the care of a holy priest of a neighbouring parish. This zealous priest, Messire Jacques Blavette, at once recognised in his young pupil excellent dispositions for learning and virtue. He profited by it, to develop both one and the other with equal devotedness, and thanks to his assiduous care, progress was rapid. He applied himself above all to prepare him for the great and holy action

that marks the life of a Christian and unites him for the first time with the God of the Eucharist. It was on the Feast of Pentecost, when he was twelve years old, that Jean Eudes made his first communion, having disposed himself, as he mentions in his 'Memoir of the gifts of God'¹ by a general confession.

Though it was not then the custom to display, at this important action, all the solemnity that surrounds it to-day, our pious scholar was not the less penetrated with an extraordinary fervour. The principal fruit he derived from it was an increase of love for the Most Holy Sacrament of our altars. From this day, he communicated every month, an unheard of thing in that parish, historians tell us, for the inhabitants were grossly ignorant of the truths of salvation, and approached but rarely, and without devotion to the Holy Table. At the same time that young Jean chose Our Lord for his portion, he consecrated all his affections to the Blessed Virgin by a vow of perpetual chastity. He was only fourteen years old when he prostrated himself before a statue of Mary, chose her for his mystical spouse, and placed a ring on her finger, a pledge of this chaste alliance.

All the rest of his life, faithful to this promise, he preserved with perfect integrity this angelic virtue. An improper word, a gesture, an immodest

¹ Collection that V. P. Eudes wrote, to remind himself of the favours he had received, and to excite himself to glorify God.

object was enough to make him blush and disturb his delicate conscience.

In seeing this young man offer his heart to Mary, could we not imagine to hear the Blessed Virgin saying to him these words, which Our Lord one day addressed to Blessed Margaret Mary?—‘I have chosen thee for my spouse, and we promise mutual fidelity, when thou hast made to me a vow of chastity. It is I who inspired thee to make it, before the world had any share in thy heart, for I wished it pure and unstained by any earthly affection.’

Thus the love of Jesus and Mary, whose names he had learned to lisp as a little child, increased in his heart, filled all its fibres, became the centre of his life, and the end of all his actions.

At this period, Isaac Eudes thought it desirable that his son should continue his studies at Caen. The mother was grieved, not so much by the pain of separation as the fear for the faith of her child. Her fears might appear exaggerated, if we did not consider that at least a third part of the population of this town was Protestant. Moreover, the Jesuit Fathers had only a day-school, a dangerous position for young men away from their families.

It is at Caen, henceforth, that the life of Jean Eudes will be unfolded, there he will labour, there he will found his works, and will leave a souvenir that more than two centuries have not effaced. At this time Caen was the most beautiful town in

Normandy; a contemporary of P. Eudes has said of it:

‘Caen par son assiette et commode et plaisante,
Par son air toujours pur et sa douceur riante,
Par ses prés, par ses eaux et par mille beautés
Justement le dispute aux plus belles cités.’

It is, above all, the town of churches, and of beautiful churches. Who does not know the Trinité or l’Abbaye-aux-Dames, built by Queen Matilda; Saint-Pierre, a splendid monument of past ages, Saint-Sauveur, composed of two churches joined together; Saint-Étienne or l’Abbaye-aux-Hommes; Saint-Jean, a beautiful Gothic edifice?

At the beginning of the 17th century, the young people of the schools were scattered through the town without any surveillance, and were rude and boisterous. But Jean had too firm a character and his faith was too strong to endure such conduct. ‘I was received,’ he says, ‘in the fourth class, in 1615, the Feast of Saint Denis, under P. Robin; I studied under his direction up to the second class, by a special favour of Our Lord, for he was a very virtuous and holy professor, he often spoke to us of God with extraordinary fervour. He helped me more than I can tell in the way of salvation.’ Let us observe that our young pupil considered before all the virtue and piety of his new professor. P. Robin on his side soon discovered the excellent dispositions of his pupil; he took particular pains with him, and progress was so rapid, that, when he

reached the rhetoric class, there was only one companion with whom he could dispute the first place.

As much as Jean advanced in learning, he did so in piety. At his arrival at the college, he chose a wise director to whom he made a general confession; and afterwards he contracted the pious habit of frequently approaching the Holy Table. The frequenting of the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion preserved him from the errors and immorality of this unhappy epoch. It is difficult for us to imagine the dangers which surrounded the young during these precarious times. The revolts of the scholars of our days are but as child's-play compared to the cruel quarrels of these unruly scholars. Needless to say that our young Eudes never mixed with any mob, and that he only frequented such schools as were virtuous and quiet.

During his holidays his happiness was to visit different churches, more particularly when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. He was often seen to pass many hours together, and to find in these entertainments with Our Lord whose conversation never wearies, the rest which he needed.

After these delightful moments passed in the presence of the Son of God, Jean Eudes found none so agreeable as those he could consecrate to His Immaculate Mother. He was one of the most fervent members of the 'Congrégation des Écoliers,' established in the college, and specially consecrated to the Queen of Heaven. He loved to recite the

office and celebrate its feasts, with some chosen school comrades. He made himself remarkable by his edifying piety and filial love for the Blessed Virgin. Such was the esteem and veneration of his comrades, that he was only known in the college by the name of devout Eudes. Towards the end of rhetoric, frightened at the dangers of the world, he thought of entering a religious community, but his director induced him to study philosophy, and he obeyed.

Before leaving the college, he wished to settle about his vocation, and know the designs of God for his future. It was in conversation with the director of his soul, and in the frequent reception of the sacraments that he sought divine light. It was no sooner given than he resolved to consecrate himself to the service of God in the ecclesiastical state; and, resolved upon this decision, he returned to his family. But such was not the wish of his parents, and he was not slow to perceive it.

The first few days were entirely given up to the joy of meeting after so long a separation. Indeed, we do not find that Jean returned to his native country during the holidays of the preceding years. Communications were difficult and travelling expensive. On the other hand, if the family spirit was greater than in our days, education also was far from being neglected.

Thus parents did not hesitate to deprive their

children of the joys of home-life, when they thought it necessary for their future, and to procure for them a good education. It was only a few days after his arrival that Jean knew of his father's design. Isaac Eudes had in view a young girl, rich, pious, and beautiful, and hoped to get her hand for his son. It was very perplexing for Jean thus to be obliged to tell his sentiments. He answered in a vague manner that he had made choice of another spouse, incomparably more beautiful, rich, and virtuous. Though annoyed by these words, his father and mother did not despair of attaining their end. They brought him some days later to a pleasure-party given by the parents of the young girl. But Jean guessing the snare, and without impoliteness, showed himself indifferent. When they returned, Isaac showed his displeasure and reproached his son. 'What do you intend to come to?' he asked. 'Is not the choice we propose to you everything that could be desired? Do you mean to pay no attention to your father's will?' And with these words he left him.

Jean then resolved to explain his hopes for the future. He went to find his father, and with much emotion told him, that having duly reflected and taken advice on the important subject of his vocation, his decision was made to embrace the ecclesiastical state. His father pretended to be vexed, but in his heart he was glad that his son did not, as he feared, choose the religious state. From this moment Jean thought of nothing but of preparing

for the ecclesiastical state. He disposed himself for it by recollection, prayer, and pious reading.

The 19th September 1620, after having passed an examination, he received at Séez the tonsure and minor orders from the hands of Mgr. Camus, his bishop.

Renouncing all the advantages that the world could offer him, to belong for ever to Him who was to be his portion and inheritance, Jean left aside the study of profane science, and applied himself altogether to theology. Even from his father he obtained permission to return to Caen to follow the public course, and to take part in a controversy. But soon, disgusted with the world, the dangers of which he feared more and more, he thought of leaving it to embrace a more perfect life. With this view, he was attracted to the Congregation of the Oratory, a year established at Caen, and founded eleven years before by M. de Bérulle. He sought admission into the new institute, which was granted, without yet having the consent of his parents, to obtain which he returned to Ri, acquainted them with his determination, and asked their blessing. His father amazed, remained some time silent, and then broke out into reproaches. 'Now, I see too well,' he cried, 'that I have only worked for an ungrateful, inhuman, unnatural son.' Jean Eudes was not shaken by these reproaches; he decided to remain some days in silence and prayer for a more favourable interview. Judging that the refusal was

irrevocable, and fearing his weakness, he sought to escape by flight from the threats of an angry father and the supplications and tears of a loved mother. He then mounted a horse and set off for Paris. But scarcely had he ridden three or four miles, when the animal suddenly stopped and refused to go any further. After vain efforts, our traveller, struck by the obstinacy of his horse, believed that Providence wished him to return. He obeyed and again came to solicit his father's consent, who, on this occasion consulted only his profoundly Christian sentiments, and said to him with emotion, 'Since you persist in your resolution, believing that it is the will of God, do it, my son; I will no longer oppose it.' Jean, overwhelmed with happiness, and thanking God for this signal favour, again set out. It was on the 25th March, the Feast of the Annunciation, that he presented himself to M. de Bérulle, who welcomed him with joy, and under his guidance Jean made rapid progress in the spiritual life. 'We had never yet seen,' says P. Martine, 'a novice so fervent and so faithful in labouring for his perfection.' His exactness in fulfilling the duties of his state, his punctuality to all the exercises, the perfection of his obedience, appeared to be his distinctive character.

The 21st December 1624, the young clerk was definitely enrolled in the sacred militia by receiving the sub-diaconate at Séz. The following Lent he was promoted to the diaconate at Bayeux, and the 20th December 1625 he was ordained at Paris.

It was at midnight, the hour of Our Lord's birth, that P. Eudes offered his first Mass, and with such a profusion of grace and consolation that he never lost the remembrance of it. He longed at that moment to bring down upon the faithful a spark of the sacerdotal spirit which already filled his heart; but Providence willed that he should be inundated with it before pouring it out on others. He was reduced to such a state of weakness that his superiors had to send him for two years to Notre-Dame-des-Vertus, the Oratorians' country-house at Aubervilliers, near Paris. Prayer and the study of the Holy Scriptures admirably prepared him for his future ministry.

Scarcely had he recovered from this illness, when he heard that the plague had fallen on the diocese of Séz. 'The scourges that ravaged the seventeenth century,' says the Abbé Bougaud, 'can give no idea of what a plague then was. The filthiness of the town, the ignorance which reigned there, the want of regular police to put a little order in such confusion, the contagious character of the disease, fright, and despair served to increase the mortality. In presence of this sickness which was communicated by the touch, that was in every breath of those infected by it, that bore infection to all that came near it, the people dared not see each other nor touch anything. At the first appearance of the scourge, the towns were deserted for entire months, grass covered the streets, which were infested by

wolves attracted by the odour of the bodies left without burial.'

After the example of the Good Shepherd who gave His life for His sheep, P. Eudes immediately begged and obtained permission from M. de Bérulle to go to the help of the plague-stricken. He then left Paris on foot, staff in hand, with the breviary and a portable altar. Received with joy by the diocesan authority and invested with all the necessary powers, he directed his steps into the very midst of the contagion, and found at Saint-Christophe, Saint-Martin, Vrigny, and Avoines those who were stricken by it, and who were abandoned by their neighbours; even by those who should give them spiritual help and the last consolations. It was in vain that he knocked at the doors of presbyteries and châteaux to procure a bed.¹ No one would lodge a man who passed his days at the bedside of the plague-stricken. One only in the middle of so much egotism and hard-heartedness, a poor priest named Laurens, consented to share his roof and his bread with P. Eudes, and offered to help him in his painful and dangerous labours. The two holy priests agreed not to separate, and every morning, after having said Mass, they provided themselves with the necessary hosts to give Holy Viaticum to the dying. Since the

¹ He could not obtain any hospitality, says P. Hérambourg, from the leading people of the parish, or even from the priests. Thus, he was like his divine Master, who left His throne of glory to comfort men, and was shamefully rebuffed.

25th August 1627 till after All Saints they thus employed their days, and often a part of their nights, in giving to the dying the spiritual help they needed.

The scourge having passed, P. Eudes received from M. de Bérulle, who had just been raised to the cardinalate, the order to go to Caen to prepare for the missions. He had scarcely arrived when the plague fell upon the town. Moved with pity and inflamed with an heroic courage, the young priest again asked to devote himself to the victims, and that he might not expose his brethren he retired to a large barrel, in the middle of a field, which has since been called the 'Field of the Saint.' Every day Mme. de Budos, abbess of the 'Trinité,' sent to the field where P. Eudes took his food and his rest the nourishment he needed. He only returned to succour P. Répichon, the first victim of the deadly contagion, who died in his arms, and two of his brethren. Jean Eudes did not fear the plague; and he was at this time again spared; but exhausted with fatigue, he was attacked with an intermittent fever, which, from the first, caused great anxiety. He alone attached no importance to it, so glad was he to offer to God the sacrifice of his life. It was not thus with his brethren and the inhabitants of Caen, especially of communities; all united in prayer for the preservation of one who was so loved and useful.

A Carmelite, writing in the name of a community,

said: 'We have heard that you feared our taking you out of the hands of God; no, no, do not fear, we have more charity for you than that, Father; but if Jesus Christ wishes still to be glorified in you and by you, in this valley of tears, you must have patience: were you at the gates of Heaven ready to enter, we should draw you back.'

P. Eudes recovered, and believed that he could not make a better use of his strength than by consecrating it, with the permission of his superiors, to preaching and to missionary labours.

CHAPTER II

MISSIONS OF P. EUDES

(1631-1675)

As soon as P. Eudes was restored to health he returned to his labours with new ardour. We shall not try to rehearse in detail all his apostolic works, they are too numerous. Independently of retreats, advent, and lenten sermons, one hundred and twelve large missions have been counted of which he was the leader and the soul. Let us content ourselves with merely relating how he was the instrument of Providence, in leading back to God entire districts, enlightening the clergy and the people, winning them back to their duty and to the practice of Christian virtue. To understand better his treatment with the priests and people, it is well to remember the abandoned, ignorant, reckless state in which most of the people lived. Two scourges above all, the Calvinistic heresy and the civil war, had caused profound trouble in France. The clergy, as we shall see, seemed to forget their obligations, and left the Christians without spiritual aid, without instruction, or even the sacraments.

The sacred orators found complacency in endless

divisions, pagan quotations, allegories, giddy phrases, subtle thoughts rather than in teaching the people; above all the peasantry, who were ignorant of the most elementary Gospel truths, and led an immoral life, stained by perjuries, homicides, duels, poisonings, violences, crimes of every sort. P. Eudes understood that the task of the missionary was very great. To instruct and win the people from vice to virtue, and to the frequenting of the sacraments, was a long and painful undertaking. 'For a mission to work some change in morality,' he wrote to Mgr. de la Vieuville, Bishop of Rennes, 'and to destroy vice and bad habits, it should last for at least seven or eight weeks. We can effect no real good in the smallest country parishes, where they last six whole weeks; vice is covered over but not radically cured, bad habits are broken but not rooted up, a passing enthusiasm but no permanent success.'

To render these missions more efficacious P. Eudes laid down wise rules. Every priest before his departure should make a three days' retreat. Each week, by a spiritual conference, the missionaries should encourage each other in the fulfilment of their duties. The mission opened with the greatest solemnity, and with a concourse coming from neighbouring parishes. The entire country took part in all these holy exercises, and participated in the fruits of salvation which flowed from it. P. Eudes had to preach in the open air before an audience of

ten, fifteen, and sometimes thirty thousand persons. The confessionals were besieged from morning till evening. 'We are here,' our valiant apostle often wrote, 'from twenty to twenty-five labourers, but fifty or sixty would not be sufficient.' His chroniclers tell us that many persons remained in the church four or five days from morning till evening, before they could get confession, without eating, or at least only eating a stolen morsel of dry bread. P. Hérambourg relates that a multitude of poor country people were there, having come six, seven, fifteen miles, and even more, notwithstanding the severity of the winter.

The morning prayers were said kneeling, and the people repeated them word for word. Thus the most ignorant learned how to say them, and they were also taught how to say them devoutly; they were followed by a sermon. From twelve until half-past two catechism was heard, after which the evening prayers were said in the same manner as in the morning, and the rest of the day was given up solely to confessions. In the towns there were two sermons each day, and on Sundays in the country. Everything possible was done to ensure the success of the mission. Every week there were particular meetings, when P. Eudes reminded the priests of their dignity, their obligations and the manner of fulfilling them well. He represented to the men how vice and tyranny are opposed to the greatness of the soul and true nobleness. He strongly con-

demned the passion for duelling, which, at this time had reached a point of fury. He taught mothers to rear their children as Christians, to watch over their daughters, and forbid them all frivolous reading and dangerous occasions. To the artisans he forbade the impieties of the trades-union. P. Costil tells us there were infamous ceremonies practised by the boot-makers, tailors, hatters, and saddlers, in which the ceremonies of the Mass and Holy Baptism were ridiculed.

On Sundays and Thursdays there were general communions, preceded and followed by pious exhortations. The children above all were the object of his particular and daily attention. They were assembled together by P. Eudes, or by one of his priests, catechised and instructed to prepare them for their first communion. Finally, to close the mission, the most imposing of ceremonies left an undying remembrance in the minds and hearts of all. A solemn procession was organised, in which were counted from twenty to twenty-five banners of different parishes. It stopped at a beautiful reposoir, where P. Eudes, surpassing himself, caused this immense multitude to melt into tears. Such was the ordinary rule of the missions preached by this indefatigable apostle, with a zeal beyond description. Those he personally conducted are too numerous for us to go into details as we would wish. A few words, however, may show us their abundant fruits.

After having evangelised ten parishes in the diocese of Coutances and Bayeux, P. Eudes came to Saint-Malo, Pleurtuit, Plouër, and Cancale. He met with an unwelcome reception, as he himself relates when writing of Plouër. 'They are very unsparing in their assertions with regard to me; some say I am the precursor of antichrist, others that I am antichrist, and others that I am a seducer and a devil. All these accusations are but as so many roses to me, but the thorns that pierce my heart are, seeing so many poor people come after me, sometimes for eight days, and being unable to get confession, though we have ten confessors.' Thus prejudices were overcome, and some contradictions at the beginning did not hinder the good which was afterwards produced. From Brittany P. Eudes returned to Normandy, and at a mission which he gave at Fresne, in the diocese of Bayeux, he converted many Huguenots, and established the custom of reciting the morning and evening prayers in common; a custom which is still preserved in many families.

In the year 1637, he evangelised Ri, his native parish, where he experienced the greatest consolations.

Bayeux, Lisieux, and Coutances were afterwards witnesses of his apostolic zeal. People came from all sides to hear him, the most hostile minds were gained and convinced, rebel hearts returned to God, and gave real proofs of it by sincere recon-

ciliations, important restitutions, and by a conversion as lasting as it was amazing.

In 1639 he gave a mission at Saint-Étienne at Caen; in 1640 he preached during Lent and Advent at Saint-Pierre. He preached in this church during the riot of the 'va-nu-pieds,' and, according to the statements of the magistrates, contributed more to re-establish order in the town than the fifteen thousand soldiers sent by Louis XIV.

In 1642, accompanied by thirty priests, he laboured for three months at Rouen. The archbishop, Mgr. de Harlay, an eye-witness of his sanctity and devotedness, ordered one of his chaplains to publish a letter patent in the town, proclaiming P. Eudes head of all the missions in Normandy. The same year he returned to Saint-Malo in Brittany, to give a large mission, which was not less fruitful than the preceding ones in conversions and graces. From Brittany he went to Saint-Lô, where he converted a great number of protestants, and continued his apostolic labours in the diocese of Coutances, evangelising Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte and Valognes. In this latter town, the crowd was so great each day, that he had to preach in the open air behind a castle. On Sundays and holidays more than thirty thousand were present . . . 'all of whom,' says P. Costil, 'as it were miraculously, heard equally well, both those near and those far away.' This mission at Valognes, nevertheless, presented serious difficulties because of the self-assuming criticising spirit of the

inhabitants. A set of young girls took upon themselves the right of pronouncing judgment on the sermons, which had greatly disconcerted many preachers. From the opening of his mission P. Eudes deputed one of his priests, P. Manchon, to try to put this spirit down. P. Manchon called on all the inhabitants of the town to attend an extraordinary sermon: the said company were present. After having caught their attention by a eulogy on Valognes, the preacher added: 'Every one knows the reputation of your town, gentlemen, a town which encloses in its precincts a number of persons distinguished for their nobility, politeness, and refined mind, from whom nothing escapes regarding literature and good taste. But what appears to me more singular and extraordinary is, that a section of young girls, which has even a share in this distinction and which is even seen among those who study the arts, profess to have great discernment. One thing is wanting to them, however: they have no president, which gives me a thought of choosing a suitable one for them, and I find none more suitable for this matter than—Balaam's ass.'

This address was applauded, but the poor girls were so utterly confused, that they dared not raise their eyes during the rest of the discourse, and their reunions were henceforth abolished.

The mission of Valognes ended as so many others, by burning in a public square bad books and immoral

pictures. Informed of this success, the general assembly of the clergy held at Paris in 1645 highly approved of the zeal of P. Eudes and his companions, and exhorted them to continue their labours. The first Sunday of Advent 1647, P. Eudes opened, at Autun, a mission which lasted three entire months. He preached every day, and often many times a day, to an immense crowd that the cathedral could not contain. People came six or seven miles to hear his instructions. So great was the fruit of his preaching that not only did he effect innumerable conversions, but re-established a former hospital, and erected a new one, established a Mass on Sundays for prisoners, and abolished masquerading, which had become a veritable engine of Satan.

The 14th February, feast of Saint Valentine, martyr, the people masked promenaded the streets during the day with most immodest dress and manners. After these guilty diversions, they passed the night at balls accompanied by all kinds of debauchery. Those who disguised themselves were called Valentines, and their leader *Mère-Folie*. P. Eudes effected so much good among them, that, on the following Saint Valentine's day, 1648, these scandals were replaced by a public pilgrimage to the Blessed Virgin. The '*Mère-Folie*' and his companions received Holy Communion, and many were ready to leave the country that they might not relapse into the same disorders.

Another mission preached at Beaune, in Bourgogne, 1648, was not less remarkable in fruits of salvation, and was also the means of doing away with an abominable custom which it seemed impossible to destroy. On Easter Sunday, at benediction, the children and young people of the town met together for the purpose of crying out in the church, the Alleluia of the prose, *O filii et filiaë*. At the end of the mission P. Eudes was an eye-witness of this horrible and unseemly music. Scarcely had these shrieks begun when, by a sign, he imposed silence, and in a few words protested against this scandal. It began again and the same howling was heard. He waited patiently till the end of the prose, then ordered the church door to be closed, mounted the pulpit, and, inflamed with a holy indignation, preached so strongly for an hour, that all were ashamed of their conduct and resolved to be more respectful in God's House.

Till the year 1651, and always with the same zeal and success, P. Eudes gave missions in Lisieux, Autun, Bayeux, Chartres, and Coutances. In 1651 he gave five missions, one of them at Paris, at the request of M. Olier, curate of the parish of Saint-Sulpice, founder of the seminary and of the Sulpician society.

'This holy priest,' says the author of his life, 'asked for his friend, P. Eudes, founder of the congregation of the Eudists, to conduct a general mission. He knew no one more gifted for preaching

and working great conversions, than this extraordinary man, whom he called the wonder of his age, and whose works till then God had blessed so abundantly.' This mission lasted the whole of Lent, and was thoroughly successful, as M. Olier expected.

After a course uninterrupted by other missions in the diocese of Normandy, our indefatigable apostle returned to Paris in 1660 to preach two missions, one at Quinze-Vingts and the other at Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

Here is what Saint Vincent de Paul wrote of his first: 'Some priests from Normandy headed by P. Eudes have just ended a mission at Paris with wonderful success. The court-yard of Quinze-Vingts is very large, but it was too small to accommodate the people that attended his sermons.' Pope Alexander VII. was informed that Paris had seen nothing comparable to the fruits of this mission; sometimes ten or twelve prelates were present at P. Eudes' instructions.

The mission at Saint-Germain-des-Prés followed it, and from the beginning immense crowds attended it. 'There were so many present at the first sermon,' wrote P. Manchon, 'and the large abbey of Saint-Germain was so crowded, that three thousand persons could not enter and had to return. This mission lasted over two months, and surpassed all the preceding ones by its brilliancy and extraordinary success.

At the closing sermon P. Eudes congratulated

the queen-mother, who had attended all the exercises, on the example she had given to her people. He had the courage to publicly denounce abuses of every kind, then so common, heresy, pernicious doctrines, bad books, luxury, the exorbitant demands of the tax-gatherers, the arbitrary distribution of ecclesiastical privileges. He conjured the queen to put a stop to these abuses; to provide for her safety and that of the young king. All present admired the holy audacity of the preacher, to whom the queen attentively listened and afterwards with all her household accompanied the procession on foot to the seminary of Saint-Sulpice. A beautiful reposoir had been erected in the court of the seminary, around which more than five hundred ecclesiastics, vested in their copes, arranged themselves. P. Eudes passed through them and laid the Blessed Sacrament on the altar. Transported at the sight of such an edifying and vast congregation, he alluded to the solemn entrance of Louis XIV. into Paris after his marriage, and cried out: 'All of you who but a few days before proclaimed so loudly Long live the King! before a prince of the earth, would you not render the same homage to the King of Heaven by crying out with me, Live Jesus!?' He had scarcely pronounced the words when 'Live Jesus!' burst forth from every mouth and heart and was enthusiastically repeated by the electrified multitude. We cannot thus continue to go into all the other missions conducted by this holy apostle. We

shall sum them up in a few simple lines written by a learned Benedictine religious regarding the mission at Meaux:—‘P. Eudes, a celebrated missionary, came there in 1664 with twelve of his priests. He preached in the cathedral every day and catechised twice a day in the church of Saint-Christophe. His exhortations produced great fruit, and in a short time considerable restitutions were made, such as money, furniture, and even in land property. He converted many heretics, and a quantity of grossly immoral paintings were given up to him which he burnt in front of the cathedral. In 1673 he again had the occasion of addressing the Court of Saint-Germain-en-Laye during fifteen days, and with such success that even he himself wrote in a letter dated the 2nd April: “They say the king and queen are pleased.”’

It was at Saint-Lô that P. Eudes, at the age of seventy-four, preached his last mission. In spite of its being winter and the fact that some had to come six or seven miles, so many came, that the old man almost every day had to preach in a public square. There was such a concourse of people that twenty priests were not sufficient. The archbishop, Mgr. Loménie de Brienne, was present at the services during the whole week. The number of restitutions made, bad books burned, sinners converted were incalculable. In his notes regarding these missions P. Eudes mentions that he converted twelve Huguenots.

It was thus that, during the space of forty years, this holy priest gave more than one hundred large missions, independently of numberless small ones. It suffices to give the detail of all these apostolic labours to show how his years were employed; though we have not said anything of his other works with which he was occupied at the same time, and with the same zeal and equal success.

CHAPTER III

FOUNDATION OF SEMINARIES

NOTHING could better show forth the power and wisdom of God in His Church, than the support He sends Her all at once when He appears to have deserted Her, and the happy guidance He gives Her in the midst of rocks and tempests. But at no period was the hand of the Divine Pilot more apparent than during the seventeenth century.

The Church of France, torn by the recent civil wars and Calvinism, seemed to be perishing, when, to save it from shipwreck, God raised up Saint François de Sales, de Condren, Saint Vincent de Paul, Olier, Eudes, Bourdoise.

Looking at it from a worldly point of view, one would imagine that the catholic religion was almost extinct. For the most part, the priests had no regard for discipline, no zeal, no respect for their dignity, defiled their sacred character and left the people in the grossest ignorance. 'The clergy,' says P. Costil, 'lived in idleness, unmindful of any decorum' in their exterior, dressing as seculars, working and trading with them when they were poor; spent in plays, feastings, and other vanities

the revenues of the church when they were rich and of good birth.' Seeing, in our days, the regularity, disinterestedness, submission, self-sacrifice of the clergy, it is difficult for us to have an idea of the indifference, cupidity, and the scandals of this sad epoch.

It had to be thus: it was the natural consequence of the political and religious troubles we have just mentioned, but above all, it was the want of training for the clergy. Those who were preparing for the ecclesiastical state lodged wherever they liked in the town to follow the course of the University, and hardly ever prepared themselves for Holy Orders by a short retreat.

Shuddering at the state of affairs, P. Eudes saw only one way of effecting religious and social regeneration: the establishing of seminaries. This was also the desire expressed by the Council of Trent, by the assembly of the clergy of France in 1625, and by the last provincial council of Rouen. But it was an undertaking easier to imagine than to realise, since this new and reforming institution would be the cause of retrenching the students in their liberty and the young levites in their negligence. In founding the congregation of the Oratory, M. de Bérulle had in view the foundation of seminaries for ecclesiastics. But the Oratorians launched forth in a different way, and preferred the work of colleges. P. Eudes felt it, and appealed to his confrères for the foundation of seminaries, but

without success. Meanwhile, Cardinal Richelieu sent for him, and he went after the mission of Saint-Lô, 1642. This profound politician represented to him how necessary it was to reform the clergy, and told him that he relied on him. The call of such a great man appeared to P. Eudes as new encouragement from Divine Providence, but he decided nothing until he had taken the advice of learned and holy persons. All encouraged him in his ideas and urged him to follow the voice of God. 'What you ask me is a miracle,' Mgr. de Cospéan, Bishop of Lisieux, answered him; 'it is a thing worthy even of the apostles; to doubt after that, if God be with you and inspires your intention, would be wanting in trust.'

As P. Eudes was bound by no vow he decided to leave the Oratorians and found a seminary at Caen. The Bishop of Bayeux, Mgr. d'Angennes, took upon himself to obtain letters patent from the king. The seminary was established, students came to study for their vocation and the duties it imposes, priests assembled together to pray to God. From 1658 P. Eudes had the happiness of presenting three hundred and fifty newly ordained to his new bishop, Mgr. Servien.

This seminary was the fifth founded in France¹

¹ The first idea of seminaries belongs to Charles Godefroy, curate of Cretteville, in the diocese of Coutances. He presented to the assembly of clergy in 1625 a treatise on the necessity of seminaries, entitled the 'College of the Holy Exercises.' P. Costil gives a sketch of it in the second chapter of the second

and the second established in the province; the first in date was that of Valence, founded in 1639 by Mgr. d'Authier de Sisgan, later on Bishop of Bethlehem, and founder of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, which he tried to amalgamate with P. Eudes' in 1664. The three others were founded at Paris in 1642: Vaugirard, later on the seminary of Saint Sulpice, by M. Olier; Bons-Enfants by Saint Vincent de Paul; and the seminary of Saint Magloire.¹ For P. Eudes the work of seminaries was superior to all others, even to that of the missions. 'It is what is called,' he said, 'saving the saviours, directing the directors, teaching the doctors, feeding the shepherds, enlightening those who are the light of the world, sanctifying those who are the salt of the Church, and effecting in her hierarchy what the Seraphims and Cherubims do in Heaven.'

The house occupied by the first Eudists at Caen did not belong to them; they secured it for themselves in 1649 and lived there until 1703. But P. Eudes soon found it insufficient, and resolved to build a large one. No site appeared to him more

book of the Annals. Cardinal Richelieu, the bishops, and many other holy persons were struck by it, and had an ardent desire that this project should be carried out.

¹ Saint Vincent de Paul knew and esteemed P. Eudes. Both inflamed with the love of God, and with zeal for the salvation of souls, understood each other, and Saint Vincent de Paul presented P. Eudes to the Queen Regent, who granted him her unqualified protection.

favourable than the Place Royale, of which one of the wings was still unoccupied. The ground was bought in 1658, with an engagement to undertake the building in six years or later. It was then necessary to begin the work in 1664, and it was with the church that the holy servant of God decided to begin; he, however, was not to see its dedication, which took place in 1687, he having gone to his reward in 1680. This beautiful church, and the seminary which was afterwards built, and accommodates at least four hundred students, in 1792 was changed into the Hôtel de Ville, and still remains the ornament of this place, of which the town of Caen is so justly proud. He afterwards obtained from Mgr. Harlay the authority to establish seminaries throughout Normandy, and was happy to labour during the rest of his life at a work, 'which,' he said, 'is preferable to every other.' Without neglecting the missions, he profited by every favourable circumstance for new foundations.

In the year 1650, Mgr. Auvry, Bishop of Coutances, wishing to mould holy and learned clergy, formed the idea of establishing a seminary in his episcopal town; consequently, it was to P. Eudes that he was pleased to confide its execution. We read, in the annals of P. Costil, three extraordinary facts which happened during its construction. An enormous stone fell from a height on the head of a workman, who was cured in a short time to the astonishment of all. A load of slates, destined for

the seminary, was spared by pirates who seized upon another shipload of the same merchandise that was coming at the same time, but which belonged to a merchant. Lastly, a brother who fell from a height of twenty-five feet, his head coming against stones, rose up perfectly cured whilst the priest was administering to him.¹

But the spiritual edifice was before all the object of P. Eudes' particular care. For the direction of the seminary he laid down wise rules, named a prefect to watch over the students, point out their exercises, and keep regular order in the house. The piety and modesty which soon reigned there edified all. In the year 1653, Mgr. de Matignon desired P. Eudes to found a seminary at Lisieux, and at the same time to accept the direction of the college. He immediately consented, receiving the warmest welcome. 'We see here,' says P. Costil,

¹ The church of the seminary of Coutances, at present the Lyceum Church, was the first consecrated to the Heart of Mary, 'who has but one heart with her beloved Son.' It is remarkable that P. Eudes, before he established a special feast in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, always united the Mother and the Son. And in the Annals of his congregation, this church is dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary; in the bull of Clement x. it is entitled, 'Ecclesia seu capella Cordis Jesu et Mariæ.' This church, begun in 1652, was blessed on the 4th September 1655, and on that day the solemn office of the Sacred Heart of Mary was celebrated. The second, which was finished in 1687 and dedicated to the Sacred Hearts, was that of the seminary of Caen; that of the enclosure of Paray-le-Monial was the third, it was built in 1688. (See *The Life of Marie des Vallées*, by M. l'Abbé Adam.)

‘what we had been witnesses of at Coutances, I mean the great joy of the inhabitants of the town, of which this new establishment was the source.’ Every one was happy to assist; some gave money, others provisions, and others furniture or utensils which they knew would be useful. But it must be admitted that the Ursuline nuns were before all in their charity to our Fathers, lending them beds, mattresses, etc.; which is continued up to the present.

We are told that at first it was very difficult to mould the young generation of Lisieux to the rule of the college, and to the frequenting of the sacraments; but little by little they were completely changed, more particularly when a congregation of the Blessed Virgin had been erected.

To testify his gratitude to the directors of the seminary and college, the bishop of Lisieux granted them the most extensive faculties for confession, not only in their own church but throughout the diocese. In 1656 Mgr. Harlay, archbishop of Rouen, wished to erect a large seminary, and spoke of his desire to P. Eudes. Immediately the chapter of the cathedral, and a great number of the curates of the diocese, influenced by the enemies of God, sought to oppose it. But the worthy prelate firmly urged on the foundation. ‘We have had,’ P. Eudes wrote in 1660 to one of his confrères, ‘great satisfaction in our students, about one hundred and twenty in number. They showed so much piety,

and recollection, both in going and returning, and during the time of the ordination, one could only recognise in them the mortified religious.' He wrote again in 1662: 'The Archbishop makes known the good of the seminary everywhere. The piety and modesty which appeared on the countenances of those whom he ordained edified him greatly. Oh, how pleasing is this work to Our Lord and His holy Mother! What wonderful advantages for the Church! How many souls will be saved by its means! What gratitude do we not owe to the Divine goodness for having chosen us, all unworthy as we are, for such a holy work, which is the most necessary, worthy, and most fruitful of all in the Church of God.'

In 1666 Mgr. de Maupas, bishop of Evreux, requested P. Eudes, who was closing a mission in the town, to undertake the direction of the seminary he was about to establish. Letters of installation were given to him, and the work had already borne fruit, when the chapter of Evreux raised up a thousand annoyances, and objected to the donation given by the bishop. The terms by which this prelate, in 1674, was pleased to confirm this donation are too remarkable for us to pass over in silence. 'We declare by these endowments,' he said, 'that, being well satisfied with the respect and submission of the said priests to the episcopal authority, with their service, their assiduity for the functions of the seminary, their zeal for the salvation

of the souls of our diocese, the good example of their life and morals, we cannot and will not choose others than these, whom, from the beginning we have chosen, to whom we have given and do give the right, by these endowments, of directing the said seminary.'

The foundation of the seminary of Rennes in 1670, following a mission preached by P. Eudes, did not meet with much opposition. On the contrary, the curates of Rennes, desiring the well-being of the students, who, till then, were under their care, gladly assisted in a work which would be specially assigned to them. On their side, the inhabitants of the town, animated with the same sentiments, and satisfied with the mission, were eager to provide for all the wants of the new establishment.

Thus, during his lifetime, P. Eudes founded six seminaries which became more and more flourishing. In 1792 the Eudists directed or possessed, as we shall see, twelve large and five small seminaries.¹

They also owned a house in the street called Des Postes at Paris, where the young Eudists stayed who were following the course of faculties, and they also received as boarders priests who had a taste for the common life, or those who wished to make retreats.

¹ The large seminaries were those of Caen, Coutances, Lisieux, Valognes, Rouen, Avranches, Rennes, Blois, Dol, Senlis, and Séz.

The five small were Rouen, Rennes, Garlière, Domfront, to which we must add the college of Lisieux.

CHAPTER IV

INSTITUTE OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY

(1641-1792)

DURING ten years P. Eudes applied himself to preaching, and by his words of fire recalled into the path of salvation those souls who had strayed away. But it was not enough to bring the wandering sheep into the fold; it had to be supported, strengthened against new attacks, removed from dangerous occasions, its bad habits overcome; it was necessary to confirm its perseverance.

For some time P. Eudes had been assisted by a poor woman, named Madeleine Lamy, who took into her house, or placed in good families, those who had returned to God. But what would be the zeal of one poor woman for such a great and difficult undertaking?

P. Eudes, after having prayed and sought advice, thought it would be well to unite all these penitents, and confide them to the care of holy and zealous persons, to procure a church for them so that they might have close at hand all the spiritual help they needed.

In 1641 some charitable and devoted persons took

up this work. He called this house, which he had no intention of making a religious institute, Our Lady of Refuge. The first few months all went on wonderfully well, and P. Eudes, on his missions, receiving only good news, had only to congratulate and encourage them. Nevertheless this undertaking was too holy and too fruitful in hope not to meet with many oppositions. Some reckless persons maintained that they should shut up an establishment unauthorised by letters of the King. But this attack only served to consolidate this great work, for P. Eudes profiting by his interview with Cardinal Richelieu asked and easily obtained these letters. Then the devil turned to another side and excited in the hearts of the mistresses dissension and jealousy. He was so successful that the house was abandoned all at once, leaving only the penitents to remove everything. Mademoiselle de Taillefer and a niece of P. Eudes, Marie Herson, were the only two who remained. The holy Founder then realised that the care necessary for such a difficult undertaking could only be expected from a community bound by vows. He was attracted towards the convent of the Visitation and asked them to give him temporary aid. Mgr. d'Angennes consented; three religious were sent to him in 1664, among them M. Patin, who was forty-four years of age. By her firmness and sweetness, this new superior soon calmed the agitation occasioned by the recent departure of the dissatisfied parties, and set all in good order. At this time,

the community until then named Our Lady of Refuge took the title of Our Lady of Charity. This title explains the work of the Institute, which is the heroic exercise of charity. We call it heroic, for this apostolate would have confounded human weakness. Nevertheless P. Eudes would not suffer any one to hesitate or draw back. 'Do you not know,' he would say to the sisters, 'that there is only one road to Heaven, the way of the Cross, there is no other. What! do you want to go to Heaven alone, and leave your poor sisters on the high road to hell, because you fear the pain of stretching out your hand to draw them back.'

P. Eudes then prayed to the Heart of Mary, furnace of undying love, begging It to inflame his daughters with love and zeal for the salvation of souls. He conjured the religious of Our Lady of Charity to remain faithful to this sublime apostolate, and to acquire the virtues necessary for their holy vocation. To render the acquisition and practice of them easy, he laid down for them a rule full of wisdom wherein all is marked out, even to the smallest details, and nothing left to caprice or private interpretations. He wished their habit to be white, symbol of purity of soul; and this white robe which signifies the innocence that those who wear it should preserve, would also be a silent lesson to those with whom they come in contact, and unceasingly remind them wherein they should seek happiness and peace. They should wear a

silver heart, to show to whom they have dedicated their affection, and to indicate that they are the daughters of the Heart of Mary. Lastly, a small blue cross hidden under their habit, to remind them that they should love the cross and never fly from it. The holy Founder wished his religious to live under the rule of St. Augustine, in like manner as the nuns of the Visitation. But to the three ordinary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, he added that of labouring for the conversion of girls and women who had fallen into disorder.

Under the happy direction of Mother Patin, Mlle. de Taillefer took the habit of the Institute, and received the name of Mary of the Assumption. Thus she was the first religious of the Order (1645), and soon became its strongest support. M. Patin, being elected superior of the Visitation in 1647, left Our Lady of Charity. Two years later, the sisters, discouraged by opposition and every-day trials, abandoned the work which, to them, seemed insupportable. Then Mlle. de Taillefer, who had only the white veil, resolved to persevere to the end, and governed the house with rare wisdom. The Bishopric of Bayeux was held by Mgr. Molé, a prelate who was not much in favour of P. Eudes and his works, and who, for a long time, had refused his letters of approval to Our Lady of Charity. Solicitations, prayers, steps of every kind had always fallen through with this bishop, when, most unexpectedly, he approved of the Institute by an

44 INSTITUTE OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY

Act drawn up and signed on the 8th February 1651, the day on which the children of P. Eudes celebrate the feast of the Heart of Mary. This so unlooked for event seemed a miracle, and its coinciding with the principal feast of the community was fresh encouragement and untold joy to P. Eudes, who was otherwise so tried, as later on we shall see. A new consolation still waited him: M. Patin was providentially led back into the little community to which she had rendered so many services. Shortly afterwards she gave the habit to P. Eudes' niece, Marie Herson, who received the name of Mary of the Nativity, received Sr. Mary of the Assumption to profession in 1653, and strengthened a great number of postulants in their vocation.

A person of distinction, belonging to one of the most noble families of the country, Mme. de Bois-David, having lost her husband, who was captain of the French guards, and many of her children, after the example of Mme. de Chantal, desired to consecrate herself to God. She left the world when she was thirty-six years of age and came and offered herself and her fortune to the new community (1657). Never had they a novice more fervent, more detached from the things of this earth, more submissive to the will of her superior, and faithful to the rule. When she was admitted to the profession she gave every promise of being a pillar to the work; but, in the inscrutable designs

of Providence, she was called from this life after long sufferings in the month of January 1660.

In these sad circumstances P. Eudes did not cease to encourage and support his daughters, and, to assure them that they were doing the Will of God, he undertook to obtain the sanction of the Pope for the Institute. With this view he sent M. Boniface, a Flemish priest who knew Italian, and whom he had often met at Paris, to Rome. It was an occasion of great expense; for M. Boniface passed two years without meeting with any encouragement in Rome. To all his advances he was assured that the Order was too recent, and that for such an undertaking more than for any other, the sanction of experience was necessary. Notwithstanding, two years later, the illustrious M. de Rance, abbot and reformer of Val-Richer, and Cardinal Retz, united their efforts and obtained from Alexander VII. the approbation so ardently desired, and for which so many prayers and mortifications had been offered. The bull of approval was given on the 2nd January 1666.

The community then consisted of sixteen professed religious, all of whom ratified their sacrifice by a solemn vow. On this occasion, P. Eudes, with a heart overflowing with joy, addressed touching words to these sisters who pronounced their vows in presence of Mgr. de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux. From that time, aided by Mother Patin, the holy Founder revised the rules and constitutions of the

new Order. They were not yet finished when Mother Patin died at the age of sixty-eight years.

That same year, 1668, the death of Sr. M. of the Assumption de Taillefer occurred, whose perseverance and courage sustained the work during its most critical moments. M. Mary of the Blessed Sacrament was elected to succeed M. Patin. From this time, the Institute, full of sap and firmly rooted, could provide for itself without having recourse to the Visitation Order. Like unto a tree severely shaken by storms, in the calm it rose up with new vigour and extended its branches. Further on we shall study its branches; at present we will only give a few details.

The first offshoot was the house of Rennes. In this town, in 1666, there was a small community composed of some penitents under the direction of Mlle. Ménard. Some nuns from Caen were asked to come and assist her. M. Patin requested Mlle. Heurtaut, a novice who was not yet received for profession, to go to Rennes. She consented and received from Mlle. Ménard the government of the house. Mlle. Heurtaut introduced the rules of the community of Caen, and directed the establishment with rare talent. She was professed there, and received the name of Sr. M. of the Trinity, under which she became renowned throughout the country, as she was afterwards in Brittany.

A number of extraordinary facts showed that she placed her whole confidence in God, and she was not

deceived in her hopes. It is related in the Annals of the Monastery of Rennes, that, one day, the community had no more than thirty sous, which Sr. M. of the Trinity had just given to three poor persons, to the great concern of the bursar who had nothing left for the supper, when an unknown person came and offered her one hundred francs, at the same time bidding her to have confidence in God.

Another time Sr. M. of the Trinity foreseeing that the wine for Mass would run short, going down to the cellar sprinkled holy water and made the sign of the cross on the barrel, which supplied them with wine during the whole year, but which dried up as soon as they had bought a new one. Nevertheless, at the request of Sr. M. of the Trinity and of Mgr. de Vieuville, the community of Caen sent to Rennes, in 1673, two of its best subjects. Sr. M. of the Trinity immediately made her solemn vows, her four companions were admitted to the noviciate, and the house was founded.

In 1675 the President of Brie requested the foundation of a monastery at Hennebont, in the diocese of Vannes, and with this intention offered a beautiful house and land. But this house was closed up in 1687, under the pretext that it had not received letters patent. In 1676, the monastery of Guingamp was founded, and developed so considerably under the skilful direction of M. of the Trinity, that it was able to furnish subjects for three new

houses. In less than two years seventeen novices received the veil, and many of the young girls among them were of noble birth. From her arrival at Guingamp, Mother M. of the Trinity often conversing with Mme. des Arcis, mentioned to her many families from whom she would have religious. 'The children are so young,' answered this lady, 'we cannot tell the future.' 'Though they are young,' replied M. of the Trinity, 'they shall be in religion before you, and later on you shall be their companion in the noviciate.' This prediction was afterwards realised, and it was the more astonishing as at that time Mme. des Arcis' husband was still living.

Thus P. Eudes had the consolation of seeing these four monasteries founded. After his death, at the request of M. de Kerlivio, vicar of the bishop of Vannes, a house was erected in this town which M. of the Trinity supported during many trials. Finally, she died at Vannes, remarkable for her sanctity and prophetic spirit, in the year 1709, aged seventy-five years. Two new houses were founded some years later, one at Tours in 1714 by the community of Guingamp, and the other at Rochelle in 1715, with the personal concurrence of the religious of Vannes, and the pecuniary assistance of Mme. Descouhel, who left them 30,000 livres.

In 1720, Cardinal Noailles called some religious from Guingamp to Paris, to re-establish order in a community of Madelonnettes. They remained there fourteen years, and not without trouble did they

reform the many abuses which had crept into it. At the same time (1724) they bought a house in the rue des Postes, where they were finally established in 1734, and remained there until the French Revolution. The Institute of Our Lady of Charity was rapidly increasing. At the breaking out of the revolution there were seven flourishing houses which were then overthrown, but it was too deeply rooted, so did not perish. Scarcely had the storm passed over when it sprang up again more vigorously than ever. We cannot here relate all that these good religious had to suffer during these unhappy times, and the faith and self-sacrifice of which they gave such proofs.

It will be sufficient to mention some of the persecutions of which Caen, the first house of the Order, was a victim.

In 1792, the district commissioners, feigning to see in the penitents unfortunate creatures deprived of their liberty, acted as their deliverers and advised them to return to the world. All of them, about fifty in number, replied that they would not leave the refuge where peace and charity reigned. The following year the religious were in their turn tried, and summoned to give their oath for the Constitution of the State. They refused and were expelled from their monastery to seek refuge elsewhere.

The superior, assisted by a young sister, Marie de Saint-Dosithée Bourdon, hired an apartment on a

third flat for the infirm sisters. They were soon traced even to this humble abode, forced to leave the town, and were obliged to seek shelter in a barn, where they had only the straw for a bed. The persecution having abated, the sisters returned to Caen. It was a miracle how they escaped imprisonment and the scaffold. The domiciliary visits were frequent and always made without due notice.

The discovery of the smallest pious object involved captivity and death. One day armed soldiers came so early in the morning that the sisters were still sleeping. In a room they found two presses; in one of them the ornaments of the church were concealed. *Sœur Marie de Sainte-Dosithée*, always self-possessed, opened for them the one which contained guimps, bands, and other such things. For these rude men it was a subject of mockery, and they amused themselves throwing all these things pell mell into the middle of the room. The sister was equal to them. 'Well,' said she, 'as soon as you have put all these things back in their place I shall open the other for you; I know your laws, and I know that you ought to leave everything as you found it.' After a warm discussion the soldiers preferred not to inspect the other press; such work was too much out of their way.

Some time after, on account of some information, the superior and another religious were imprisoned. *Sœur Marie de Sainte-Dosithée* alone remained with

the infirm, and not being able to procure food during this time of scarcity, took this resolution. She made all the old nuns get into a cart, and thus she conducted them to the municipality. 'I am bringing you infirm sisters,' said she to the officers, 'I can no longer provide for them.' 'Very well, we 'll imprison them,' was the answer. 'Do it, Sir; at least you will feed them.' The officials were perplexed, and thought it better to give the other two religious their liberty. Thus, it was, that, through continual tribulations the community of Caen passed through the period of their Revolution.

At Rennes, the expulsion took place in 1792. The community then was composed of twenty-six choir sisters, eight lay sisters, and two tourières. All indignantly refused to give the oath. They were found in the church, and left calm and resigned in their habit and white choir cloak. Though many of them were scattered in the world they wore their holy habit for many months.

At Guingamp the sisters preferring to close their church rather than to receive a perjurer, one day a mob took them unawares demanding if any 'calotins' were in the house. The priest perceiving that the mob was coming up the stairs by which he was going down, hid behind the door of the attic. The head of the band who was the first to see him enter, placed himself before the open door, ordered a good search to be made, and then gave

the command to return. When closing the door, this brave man, who had been led astray by these villains, grasped the priest's hand and in a low voice said to him ; ' you have had a narrow escape.' The order of quitting the convent in twenty-four hours was handed to the superior on the 17th October 1792, during the recreation. She turned pale, but was able sufficiently to command herself to continue the conversation. The next day the dreadful separation took place. The sisters were forbidden to unite together, the greater number returned to their families ; two of them, who had no home to go to, wandered into the country, passed the first night in a mill, resting on sacks of flour, and soon after found a refuge in Châtelaudren where they nursed the sick and instructed the children. The plunder of the monastery was decreed, but the inhabitants of Guingamp, full of respect for this holy asylum, touched nothing for several months until two former religious disguised as peasants returned to Guingamp and removed nearly all the furniture, which is in use up to the present day in the convent of Saint-Brieux.

At Vannes, the breaking up of the community took place during the first two weeks of October 1792. All the sisters left in their habits wearing their choir cloaks and joined together in a particular house to follow the rule as much as circumstances would permit them. But on the 24th October a new decree was issued by the Commune

of Vannes, commanding the sisters to take off their veil, guimpe, and scapular, which, it was said, they were obstinate enough to wear under the pretext that they had no other clothes, to return to their respective homes, and more than two were forbidden to live in one house.

At Tours, after a continuation of annoying visits, an official came on the 18th October 1792 to put the seal on the sacristy and announce to the sisters that the hour of departure had come. 'Who can picture,' says a writer, 'the deep affliction of the religious when they crossed the threshold where they had hoped to live and die! It must have been something like the sorrow of a son unjustly turned out of his father's house, and sees the home of his birth with the pious souvenirs that reminded him of the glory and honour of his ancestors fall into profane hands. In this house they were brought forth to the religious life; there, at the foot of the altar they took their vows and received divine graces; there, they left the graves of their sisters which were a gentle reminder and an encouragement to them to put in practice the most difficult virtues.' They dispersed carrying with them only indispensable articles of clothing, to do which, the council had condescended to give them permission. In 1793, all the religious were condemned to solitary confinement, and about three hundred of them were imprisoned in the monastery where they encountered every kind of suffering.

At La Rochelle, the decree of expulsion was notified on the 27th September 1792 to the superior, who assembled all the sisters and told them that the house was to be empty in three days. They dispersed to their different families, and succeeded in procuring from time to time spiritual aid, by coming in twos or threes to the house where the Abbot Mercier was concealed. But sixteen months later it was forbidden to all those who were not natives of La Rochelle or America to remain in the town. Then they were asked to give their schismatical oath, and refusing to do so their relations were held responsible. In many families these poor sisters were reproached by them. One of them some time afterwards said, that, 'it was well for those who were without relations; at least, they had only to bear their own personal suffering.' In spite of this they remained unshaken and were imprisoned. The 3rd April 1794, they were conducted to Brouage, a small town which had been abandoned on account of its unhealthiness. A number of them sank under the sufferings and daily privations, or fell victims to the wretched climate. On the hottest days their jailers made them root up weeds on the ramparts with knives, and then led them back at stated hours to the prison. At times their misery was so great that their more humane jailers sometimes gave permission for them to beg in the neighbouring towns. This lasted until the beginning of February 1795, when the death of

Robespierre put an end to these horrible sufferings. At Paris, the sisters of Saint Michel had less to suffer though they were cruelly tried. Two days after the massacre of the Carmes and of the Abbey, they received the order to quit the establishment on the 18th September. They were allowed to remove the furniture before the house was pulled down. Some of the sisters retired to the Chaussée du Maine. A few neighbours, though very much attached to the ideas of the day, had a liking for them and more than once aided them in their distress, for during these years of famine their misery was extreme. Some ladies had pity on them and assisted them. 'For some time,' we read in the *Annals*, 'the sister bursar was afraid to appear in the shops where she was in debt as she had nothing to pay. However, one day she was in such want, that she overcame her fears and entered, but she was not repulsed. 'Oh, come, it is a long time since we have seen you,' was heard on every side, 'no doubt because you cannot pay us; well, we won't speak of it, take what you want and you can pay us when you are able.' At the end of a year the sisters had to leave the Chaussée du Maine, and they installed themselves in houses which were dependent on the former Oratory, in the Rue Saint-Jacques. In January 1796, they received the order to quit these buildings in eight days, and they took refuge in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs, where they were allowed to

remain until better days, and to erect a small chapel.

The other houses of the Institute, after being scattered, and having passed through trials of every kind, were re-established, with the exception of Vannes, of which we shall speak hereafter.

CHAPTER V

CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY

(1643-1792)

WE have seen how P. Eudes, after having prayed much and taken the advice of holy and experienced friends, left the Oratory to take up the work of seminaries.

But for such an undertaking fellow-labourers were needed, and he thought of erecting a new congregation.

Furnished with the approbation of Mgr. d'Angennes, his bishop, he chose five companions, and on the 25th March 1643, Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin and of the Incarnation of the Word, he consecrated his small society to Mary. He accompanied them on foot to Notre Dame de la Délivérande, a notable place of pilgrimage, three miles from Caen.¹ On the same day they were installed in a house which they had possession of,

¹ Notre Dame de la Délivérande, the most celebrated pilgrimage of the diocese of Bayeux. In 1793 the faithful did not fail to come great distances to kneel at the door of the sanctuary, as it was forbidden to enter. The chapel was too small, and has been replaced by a magnificent church, which was finished in 1895, and which is visited every year by more than one hundred thousand pilgrims.

at Caen. There they built a small chapel, and unanimously acknowledged P. Eudes as their superior.

Animated with the same spirit of simplicity, with the same desire of perfection, they edified each other by their exactness in their duties, and, without written rules, were models of fervour and regularity. 'Their will,' we read in the annals of the congregation, 'was that of their superior, always ready to do whatever he wished through the profound respect they had for his person, seeing in him only Jesus Christ. It seemed as if their hearts were reduced to one, like those of the first disciples of the Apostles, so prompt were they to anticipate each other. Simplicity was so familiar to them that they were known by it everywhere.' But from without contradiction was met with on all sides which threatened from the beginning the existence of this humble congregation. P. Eudes desiring only the glory of God, and knowing that men build in vain if the Lord builds not, resolved to solicit the approbation and support of the Holy See. He easily obtained from Mgr. de Matignon, bishop of Coutances, and Mgr. d'Angennes, bishop of Bayeux, petitions for Pope Urban VIII. This first step could not be immediately crowned with success; the congregation was too recent, and as yet had neither written rules nor constitutions. P. Eudes then undertook to revise the rules, which he divided into two parts. The first, which was dedicated to our Lord, contained the duties; and the second, to our

Blessed Lady, contained the virtues of the children of the congregation as Christians and priests. These rules, drawn from the Sacred Writings, form one of the best treatises of Christian and religious perfection; they are a masterpiece of spirituality, the worth of which can only be appreciated by meditation, and, as P. Eudes has said, these rules carry with them their own approbation, since they are taken from the Sacred Scripture. They are the preliminaries of the Statutes and Constitutions, and differ from them inasmuch as the Rules make known what is to be done, and the Constitutions point out the manner in which to do it. The rules, says P. Eudes, command us to pray, and the constitutions specify the number and the kind of the prayers we must say. The rules ordain that the right to property be banished, and the constitutions teach in what way we ought to practise it. The holy Founder then presented this first sketch of the rules and constitutions to the bishop of Lisieux, Mgr. de Cospéan, who was anxious to give them his approval. They decree that the Congregation of Jesus and Mary is an ecclesiastical body, whose members shall take no vow but shall be united by the bond of charity; it shall be composed of two sorts of persons, priests and lay brothers. Nothing is forgotten in the Constitutions, all is provided for, the most important actions as well as the ordinary common ones. In them P. Eudes reveals himself as a consummate saint and as a skilful director. The

holy Founder having thus completed his work again applied to Rome. One of his children, M. Mannoury, went there twice, in 1645 and 1647, furnished with letters of approbation from many bishops and from Louis XIV. But, followed by the underhand dealings of the Jansenists, his declared enemies, and by the Oratorians who were annoyed at his leaving their congregation, he could only obtain congratulations for the new Institute without formal approbation. It was only in 1674 that a decree of the Holy See confirmed the Latin statutes of the society. We cannot even say if it was an approbation of the Latin rules, or of a summary of the constitutions. But let us return to P. Eudes and his first companions.

After the death of Mgr. d'Angennes they met with the most violent opposition. Mgr. Molé, the new bishop, had been warned against them, and he resolved to scatter them and to do away with the seminary of Caen, the cradle of the new community. On the 29th November 1650 he ordered the church to be closed and the altar to be demolished. P. Eudes and his brethren humbly submitted to this persecution, which they keenly felt, and let the storm pass over.

After the death of Mgr. Molé in 1653, the Abbot of Sainte-Croix, his brother, who was appointed to succeed him, before even he received his bulls from Rome, requested the members of the chapter to re-establish the chapel of the seminary. This sentence of reinstating was for P. Eudes one of the

greatest joys of his life. But Providence seemed only to have chosen M. l'abbé de Sainte-Croix to repair his brother's error, for shortly afterwards he renounced the bishopric of Bayeux and submitted his resignation to the King.

Mgr. Servien was appointed in his place in 1654. This new prelate was immediately deceived by P. Eudes' enemies, and he conceived the idea of closing the church at the first opportunity. But as he was very virtuous, and fearing he might be deceived, he secretly resolved to examine things more closely. The better to observe P. Eudes, he gave him a mission to preach some miles outside the episcopal town. He soon recognised him to be a holy priest and a zealous missionary, and not proud and insubordinate. He repented for having rashly judged him, and wished to repair his wrongs. He ordered his carriage without delay, went to Caen, and embraced the worthy superior, publicly asking pardon. He permitted him to give a mission throughout the diocese, and gave him the most extensive powers. A new deputy, M. de la Haye de Bonnefond, of the seminary of Caen, was sent to Rome again to solicit its approbation for the Society. But P. Eudes' enemies had their partisans, and again they thwarted his designs and calumniated the rising Institute and its Founder. Still more they discovered and published a petition drawn up (in his name but without his knowledge) by M. Boniface of whom we have already spoken, and they hastened to make

it known to the King. To obtain the confirmation of the Institute of Eudists, it proposed to engage them by an indispensable vow, to teach and sustain the opinions, even though they be uncertain, which should tend to the support and advancement of the Holy See. At this news the King was extremely angry. In vain P. Eudes protested that he knew nothing of it, that he had sent M. Boniface only for the institute of Our Lady of Charity and not for his congregation; in vain M. Boniface acknowledged his imprudent conduct and declared that he had taken this step without any command from P. Eudes; the blow had fallen, and under such circumstances it was no longer prudent to think of obtaining the desired approbation. Nevertheless M. de Bonnefond before returning to France was able to obtain spiritual favours for the missions of the Eudists, and a bull to erect the confraternity of the Sacred Heart in the church of the seminary of Coutances, a privilege which was extended to all the houses of the congregation.

Though Divine Providence severely tried his zealous servant, he met with consolation. During these trials many bishops bore testimony of their affection and goodwill for P. Eudes, and the new congregation steadily developed.

P. Eudes seeing the number of his children increase gave himself up heartily to form them in their holy vocation, and only admitted such subjects as had been well tried.

Seeing the sad state of Caen, in 1652, at the seminary of Coutances he established a house of probation and intrusted the care of it to M. Montaigu. We read in the Annals, 'the students gave themselves up exclusively to prayer, reading, silence, mortification of the senses, to the frequenting of the sacraments, and to a little manual labour. They lived in their solitude with so much fervour, regularity, and obedience that their superiors had to watch over their words when giving them advice, so great was their ardour.

The insufficiency of the buildings and the cost of food obliged them to transfer the house of Probation successively to Caen, then to the diocese of Evreux, and finally to Launay near Périers in the diocese of Coutances. Thus P. Eudes neglected nothing which would tend to the well being of his Institute. But if he watched over its extension he had more at heart its perfection. 'Send to Coutances,' he wrote to P. Mannoury, 'the young man who wishes to enter the congregation, provided he is resolved to renounce his own will, to be corrected of his faults, and to live and die in the congregation.' And on another occasion: 'Be careful to form him to the spirit of our Lord, which is a spirit of detachment and renouncement to all things and to self, a spirit of abandonment to the Divine Will which is manifested to us in the Gospel and by the rules of our congregation.'

M. Boudon, Archdeacon of Evreux, remarkable

for his virtue and his writings gave this testimony. 'In our days it has pleased God to raise up in His church a holy congregation of missionaries founded by R. P. Jean Eudes, a most fervent and zealous apostle who is devoted and consecrated to the loving Heart of Mary. These holy missionaries, remarkable for the purity of their doctrine and untold zeal, preach with incomparable success in the towns and country.'

Such were the virtues and such the sentiments with which P. Eudes inspired his children, by his example, rules, and customs. During his life as well as after his death, the Eudists remained scrupulously attached to the Roman doctrine. P. de Montign, S.J. thus speaks, 'After the death of P. Eudes, the Lord continued to bless the work of His servant. The congregation of the Eudists strengthened and increased during the eighteenth century, and happily preserved its primitive spirit.'

Always unassuming, invariably attached to the true doctrine, it worked good in obscurity without seeking either fame or praise. It has produced a number of holy priests, zealous missionaries, and wise superiors of seminaries.¹

¹ M. de Poitevin who died at Senlis in 1750, M. Sevoy who died at Rennes in 1765, have left behind them a reputation of learning and piety that time has not effaced. We may mention M. Daon, superior of the seminary at Caen, author of two valuable works: *Conduite des Confesseurs*, and *Conduite des âmes dans la voie du salut*.

Many other Eudists equally deserve to be mentioned here.

CHAPTER VI

INSTITUTION AND PROPAGATION OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

(1641-1792)

ANOTHER glory of P. Eudes is, that he was the first apostle of devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and the first promoter of this devotion which is so attractive and so fruitful in graces. On this point we only wish to claim for the holy servant of God what belonged to him, without denying that the wonderful extension of this worship is due, in a great measure, to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque. But let us remember how much this devotion to the sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was appropriate at the time of P. Eudes.

We have just shown some of the evils suffered by Christian France, so deeply tainted by Protestantism and Jansenism—above all, this last poison, under the appearance of a remedy, which glided in so subtle a manner and made way even into the very heart of many communities which appeared flourishing. With its wily forms, Jansenism, making profession of austere virtue, of returning back to the sound morality of the Gospel, carried with it every-

where discouragement, despondency, and oftentimes despair in souls. How could salvation be hoped for when grace was granted only in a parsimonious fashion? How could an inexorable master be overcome, how could the perfection he exacts from his creatures be attained, and how could one enter into a holy familiarity with a judge who only metes out the punishment without considering the weakness and misery of men? How could a God be loved who does not love? Thus did Jansenism work to restrain the hearts of men by limiting the mercy and love of God, by keeping the faithful from the Blessed Eucharist, which dogma it did not dare to deny, though it destroyed its fruits. It completed, though in a less violent manner, the destruction of Protestantism. To this soulless code of Christianity, this cold and lifeless religion, a breath of love was wanting, a vital zeal, a heart was wanting to it. P. Eudes foresaw it and knew its remedy. He had only to sound his own sentiments, to enter into himself, to see what gave him that ardent zeal, that sacrifice of an apostle, that supernatural life which animated all his actions and supported him in all his enterprises. It was the love of Jesus and Mary, a love which he drew from the source itself, the Sacred Hearts, a love which would be manifested at its own time and at its own hour to correspond to these errors and remedy these evils.

After the example of Saint Mechtilde, Saint Bernard, P. Eudes had a special devotion to the

Heart of Jesus, and moreover, he knew that to arrive at this adorable Heart, the simplest way was by that of His holy Mother. He did not separate these two Hearts; as it were, he only made one of them, and, intentionally, he would not call his Institute the Congregation of Jesus and of Mary, but Jesus and Mary. Guided by the same thought he chose for an emblem the figure of Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin reunited in one heart; and gave to his children this beautiful invocation to the sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary: Ave cor sanctissimum, etc., in which he invokes these two Hearts as one only heart.¹ With the same sentiments he pre-

¹ Hail, 'Heart most holy!'

Hail, Heart most meek!

Hail, Heart most humble!

Hail, Heart most pure!

Hail, Heart most devoted!

Hail, Heart most wise!

Hail, Heart most patient!

Hail, Heart most obedient!

Hail, Heart most watchful!

Hail, Heart most faithful!

Hail, Heart most blessed!

Hail, Heart most merciful!

Hail, most loving Heart of Jesus, Son of Mary!

We adore Thee; We praise Thee,

We glorify Thee; We give Thee thanks,

We love Thee, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength,

To Thee our hearts we offer, we give, we consecrate, we immolate, accept and take possession of them entirely, and purify them, and enlighten them, and sanctify them, and live and reign in them now and for ever.
Amen.

scribed for the priests of his congregation to end all their pious exercises with this prayer: Blessed be the loving Heart of Jesus and Mary for all eternity!

It was then these two inseparable hearts, inflamed with the same love for men, that P. Eudes presented to the faithful to rouse them from their indifference, to re-enkindle that sacred fire extinguished by the foregoing heresies, and draw forth that sublime strength which makes saints and martyrs. But when we think of the middle of the seventeenth century, does not the zeal of P. Eudes appear audacious and bold? Nevertheless nothing stops him, and strong in his sound theological science, carried away by the enthusiasm of his love, he does not hesitate to give to this devotion, as ancient as Christianity, the heart-stirring soul which it required.

For him, the moment had come to bring out in full light these two living sources of all the mysteries of our religion, to establish feasts in their honour, and to have recourse to these overflowing fountains in the spiritual poison which affected the souls of men.

About this year, 1641, P. Eudes composed an office with nine lessons in honour of the Sacred Heart of Mary, stamped with devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. 'It is one of the most devout offices we possess,' wrote M. Boudon, Arch-deacon of Evreux, 'it would seem that the Blessed Virgin herself inspired it with sweetness, it would be almost impossible to say it without being imbued

with a deep spirit of fervour.' It was approved by the Bishop of Bayeux, and was recited in the Seminary of Caen, and in the Community of Our Lady of Charity in 1643, to solemnise the feast of the Heart of Mary.

In 1648 the venerable servant of God, when preaching a mission at Autun, obtained from Mgr. de Ragny permission to celebrate with solemnity on the 8th February following, in the cathedral, the feast of the Heart of Mary. This prelate authorised the office composed by P. Eudes; 'exhorting each and all in his diocese, seculars as well as regulars, to make use of it for the honour and veneration due to the Immaculate Heart of the Mother of God.'

May we not here admire the conduct of Providence, which makes use of Mary to open the way to her Divine Son? In the Cathedral of Autun, the feast of the Heart of Mary was for the first time solemnised; and six months before at a distance not very far away, Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, who was to promote the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was born.

This feast continued to be celebrated in Autun, and twenty-seven years later, Blessed M. Mary writes in her memories, that the 8th February, feast of the Heart of Mary, was one of the days dearest to her devotion. It is more than likely that it was from this source she drank in devotion to the Sacred Heart, for its hymns, its anthems, its lessons breathe devotion to the Sacred Heart, in fact it is

70 DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEARTS

the mainspring of the whole office. We give two of the first verses of one of the hymns :—

‘O doux échange ! O tendresse ineffable !
Jésus, Marie ont ravi notre cœur
Pour nous donner leur cœur incomparable :
Avec transport chantons notre bonheur !

‘Enfants du Cœur de Jésus, de Marie,
Fiers d’un tel nom, confus de tant d’amour,
Au Cœur sacré qui vous donne la vie
Livrez vos cœurs, donnez-les sans retour.’

From the diocese of Autun, P. Eudes extended with full permission the feast of the Heart of Mary throughout Dijon, Soissons, Noyon, Evreux, Bourges, Coutances, Lisieux, etc. At the same time he established confraternities to perpetuate this devotion, and everywhere published his book on *Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*.

It is then with reason that M. l’Abbé Bougaud could say, in the tenth chapter of his interesting life of Blessed Margaret Mary : ‘To accomplish her memorable mission what supports did not God prepare for her ? In Normandy there was a holy missionary, the venerable Père Eudes, chosen by God to establish in His church devotion to the Heart of Mary, who in fact had recently inaugurated it in Autun, Beaune, Dijon, and throughout all Bourgogne, as a sweet morning star that ushered in the rising of the true sun, devotion to the Heart of Jesus, who continued its propagation

in Brittany, Normandy, Rennes, Coutances, Caen, Evreux, and who for all these reasons, for his eminent piety, and ardent zeal to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, would have been well prepared to be enlightened by her.'

The illustrious writer in this passage renders a brilliant testimony to the zeal of P. Eudes in glorifying the Heart of the Mother of God. But is he aware that in the year of which we now speak, he had for a long time caused to be celebrated and approved, not only the feast of the Heart of Mary, but also that of the Heart of Jesus, and that the latter had been solemnised since 1670, in the seminary at Rennes. This is what we read in the archives of this establishment. 'We permit,' says Mgr. de Vieuville, 'the priests of the said congregation to solemnise each year the feast of the adorable Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ with an octave, and for this end to make use of the office and mass proper, and to make the office double the first Thursday of each month, if it be not a double or a semi-double; the same with regard to the Heart of Mary, etc. . . . 8th March 1670.'

From this time these two feasts became the titular feasts of the Institute of V. P. Eudes. The 20th April of the same year, Mgr. de Vieuville approved, by another and still more explicit act, the feast and office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

We need not give in detail the approbations of the bishops of Rodez, on the 27th July 1670;

Coutances, 29th July 1671; Evreux, 8th October 1670; Rouen, 3rd February 1671; Bayeux, 16th March 1671; Lisieux, 24th September 1671; and many others. Let us remark that Blessed Margaret Mary received her first revelation three years later (27th December 1673), and that the first feast of the Sacred Heart was celebrated by the Visitation Nuns in the Convent of Dijon, nineteen years after that which P. Eudes had celebrated at Rennes. We must also remark that the Visitation, having no office proper, for a long time made use of the Mass and office composed by our venerable Founder.

This anteriority of the apostolate of V. P. Eudes is so certain that the illustrious Bishop of Soissons, Mgr. Languet, the first writer of the life of the blessed sister, has publicly acknowledged it. Here is what he says: 'Devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Lord was already authentically approved in some dioceses before it was known in the Monastery of Paray; and Blessed M. Mary had begun to receive on this subject the light and graces which are related in her life. It was through P. Eudes, the founder of many seminaries, and of a congregation of priests which bears his name, that this devotion was promoted from the middle of the last century; and that the feast of the Heart of our Lord was celebrated with the approbation of many bishops in various dioceses of Normandy.' Let us once more recall these lines written by Rev. P. Jean, S.J., in the *Études Religieuses*: 'From his earliest

years the beauty of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary had inflamed the pure and loving heart of that devoted servant of God, Jean Eudes. When ordained priest his devotion to the Sacred Hearts knew no bounds. To rekindle everywhere the sacred flame which consumed him, and at the same time to inspire the profoundest respect for the two objects of his preaching, to cause their praises to be chanted, and to celebrate feasts in their honour; such was the sole object of P. Eudes, particularly from the year 1641. We give this date to justify the title legitimately claimed by the children of this holy priest; that he was the first apostle of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. If this priority universally recognised to-day could still be disputed, *e.g.* in favour of Blessed Margaret Mary, it suffices to remember that this predestined virgin was born in the diocese of Autun in July 1647, and that on the 8th February following P. Eudes solemnised in the Cathedral of Autun, the first feast in honour of the Admirable Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus; these two hearts being inseparably united in the veneration and mind of this holy priest.

‘To take from P. Eudes and at the same time from Blessed Margaret Mary their glorious titles, we are not going to look back in the annals of the Church for such saints who specially honoured the Sacred Heart before the seventeenth century; we only speak here of the particular form and not of the substance of a devotion, which evidently takes

its source from the Last Supper or from Calvary.' Thus speaks R. P. Jean, of the Society of Jesus, and it is in all justice, since P. Eudes preached this devotion more than twenty years before P. de la Colombière, and established its feast and composed the office many years before our Lord's revelations to Blessed Margaret Mary. If it be true that this holy nun gave to this devotion a new and powerful impetus, it is not less indisputable that P. Eudes himself largely contributed to its propagation, as well as by the three religious congregations which he founded.

Never did he give a mission or retreat without bringing forward his cherished devotion, without establishing confraternities of the Sacred Heart. Religious communities particularly, as he himself tells us, and especially the Ursulines, Carmelites, Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament, the Congregation of Our Lady, warmly seconded his views and gladly adopted the feasts of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the sacred Heart of Jesus.

We find these offices printed and dated 1674 in the book of the House of the religious of Montmartre. And is it not most remarkable that P. Eudes directed to be sung, two hundred years before, on the same ground where rises to-day the national monument of the Sacred Heart, these beautiful words :

‘ Gaudeamus exultantes,
Cordis Jesu personantes
Divina præconia.’

‘Let us rejoice in singing the praises and exalting the divine prerogatives of the sacred Heart of Jesus.’

But if he was happy to propagate this devotion, nothing gave him more pain than to see it neglected or abandoned.

He learned one day that a new superior of Benedictines had thought it well to suppress the two feasts of the Sacred Hearts. Immediately he wrote her a long letter, beginning with these words: ‘Madam, though I have not the honour of knowing you, nevertheless I take the liberty of writing to tell you how pained I am to hear that you have suppressed not only the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, but that you have also resolved to do away with the feast of her divine Heart. Oh, Madam, what are you doing? Those who have preceded you, and were so wise and virtuous, have established those feasts by an effect of the singular devotion they had for that glorious Virgin, and you wish to destroy the work of their piety! What an honour it would be for you, and what shall they say to you on the day of judgment? The divine Goodness had placed in your house these two fountains of graces and blessings, and you desire to close them up! The sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary were two impregnable towers to shelter you from the enemies of your souls, and by this act you would ruin them.’

Needless to say that the Order of our Lady of

Charity and the Third Order of the Sacred Heart were the two principal sources of this devotion. It was the same in all the Institutes founded by the Eudists.¹

We will mention in particular the small society established by P. de Montaigu at Rouen, about the year 1670, for the direction of schools in the town and suburbs; that of the Sacred Heart founded for the same end at Périers by P. Dupont in 1674; Bon Sauveur at Saint-Lô by P. Hérambourg, 1708; and that of the Bon Sauveur at Caen, taken up under the direction of P. Creully, 1720; the Society of the Sacred Hearts founded at Rouen by P. Legrand, 1724; The Providence of Caër or Evreux, whose rule was revised by P. James in 1724; the community of la Sagesse, at Rennes, confided to

¹ We read in the Archives of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Holy Heart of Mary, by R. P. Granger, missionnaire de la Délivrande: 'The office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,' composed by P. Eudes, 'is a veritable colloquy of love between the Heart of Jesus and the faithful soul. It is the canticle of canticles written near to the crib, near to the Cross, near to the Altar, and put into liturgical order. May we not say that the Sacred Heart has Itself inspired it with sweetness; his most ardent desires have there found their confluence. P. Eudes celebrates the Sacred Heart as those privileged saints have done, to whom Jesus revealed its infinite tenderness. The Sacred Heart of P. Eudes is the Sacred Heart of St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, particularly St. Mechtilde and of St. Gertrude.' P. Granger, quoting the words of P. de Curley, adds: 'The Mass deserves the same praise; if we had to name it, we should call it the Mass of fire. It is the eternal love beaming forth in prayerful and moving notes.'

P. Le Vanier; and the house of 'la Retraite,' founded by the same priest in 1725, at Marcillé-Robert, in the above-named diocese. Another cause which contributed not a little to promote the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, were the many and beautiful prayers composed by P. Eudes, and the confraternities he erected in their honour.

Practised in the seminary by the priests and students, these holy exercises became known to the world, and are in use even to the present day. Many dioceses have also adopted the two feasts instituted by our zealous apostle, and made use of his offices until the Roman Liturgy was made of obligation. They are also found in many missals, breviaries, and books of piety. We may even affirm that a number of congregations dedicated to the Sacred Heart have adopted, unconsciously, prayers composed by P. Eudes. Thus the priests of Issoudun adopted the office of P. Eudes and his beautiful prayer: Ave Cor Sanctissimum, without knowing their origin, from an old parishioner of Bourges. In fine, this holy priest longed to publish everywhere the magnificence of the Sacred Hearts. 'P. Eudes' ideas of the Sacred Heart are admirable,' said V. P. Libermann; 'he was carried away by love for the interior life of Jesus and Mary. It was his devotion *par excellence*, and the foundation of all he has given to his congregation.'

The children of our holy missionary have con-

tinued his apostolate, and developed this catholic outpouring towards the sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Many maintain that it was owing to P. Hébert, Eudist, that Louis XVI. made his vow to the Sacred Heart: 'You see, O my God, all the wounds of my heart.' At all events he was its trustee, and if this act of faith, a supreme legacy of expiring royalty, has come down to us, it is owing to the precaution taken by P. Hébert to have many copies of it, which were preserved after the massacre of the 2nd September.¹

¹ See the learned work of T. R. P. Le Doré, entitled: *Le P. Eudes, premier Apôtre des Sacrés Cœurs de Jésus et de Marie.*

CHAPTER VII

THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART¹

P. EUDES, after having imbued with his spirit, and particularly with his love for Jesus and Mary, his first Institutes, Our Lady of Charity, and the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, was anxious to found a third society to promote devotion to the Sacred Hearts. It was not enough for him to enroll under their banner, at the ending up of his missions, the faithful of both sexes; he wanted to unite together more perfect souls who, not being able to leave their family and desiring to remain unmarried, would encourage each other by common prayer and mutual example to the practice of more solid virtue.

He formed for this end, under the name of 'Society of the Sacred Heart,' a kind of Third Order of the Institute of Our Lady of Charity and of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. We cannot pass over in silence this third family of P. Eudes; it is remarkable for the number of its members, and the services it has rendered to holy religion.

According to M. Souchen, in his *Livre des Vierges*

¹ To avoid returning to this subject, we shall speak in this chapter of the former and present state of this Institute.

et des pieuses Veuves, the Third Order numbers more than fifteen thousand members. In Brittany there are a number of parishes which have not less than forty 'Bonnes Sœurs'; it is thus they are called in the country.

'P. Eudes instituted this society,' says P. Hérambourg, 'for persons, who, living in the world, have not the health, means, or vocation for entering into religious congregations, and who, nevertheless, wish to lead a life more perfect than those who are enrolled in the confraternities of the Sacred Heart, also founded by him, in which all are received whose lives are not worldly or scandalous. He desired its members to be without reproach, to practise true and solid virtue, to have a truly filial heart for the Mother of love, and he wished them to live in continency or perfect chastity (in the state of celibacy or widowhood). He ordered them to wear underneath their ordinary dress a white tunic in honour of the Immaculate Conception, a white silk sash in honour of her Maternity and Virginity, and a cross of red silk fastened to the tunic over the heart in honour of her Dolours.'

The manual of the Society lays down that the persons admitted be at least twenty-five years of age, able to act freely, and that they should make a year's probation. It is not likely that P. Eudes himself composed all the articles of this rule, but, says P. Hérambourg, they were probably revised and formed by a Eudist.

THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART 81

This Society which, by analogy, we shall call the Third Order, was founded for the same end as the Third Order of Saint Francis, Saint Dominic, and of Carmel, but with rules and practices more accessible to persons living in the world. It has even something more perfect than these Third Orders, since married persons can have no part in them. It really constitutes religious life in the family. It rapidly increased even during the lifetime of P. Eudes throughout the provinces of Normandy and Brittany. It passed the revolutionary period in rendering to these countries valuable religious services.

We give what we read *à propos* of this subject in the *Essai historique sur les Monuments de Dol*, by the Abbé Lécarrate: 'In this glorious task the clergy were aided by pious persons who were called in the church, "Sœurs des SS. Cœurs de Jésus et Marie." These humble women renouncing marriage lived in the midst of their families whose joy and pride they were. They were in the midst of the world as the lily among thorns. They instructed children, taught them their prayers and catechism, so that later on they would be able to provide for themselves. Of an irreproachable modesty they inculcated the love of this virtue on their young pupils. When the priests were banished from the country, the Christian pulpits taken possession of by blasphemers, when the churches were profaned by infamous songs, the "Bonne Sœur" taught the

82 THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART

children to sing the canticles of the mission. When the sick were dying without the aid of a priest, she tried to procure one, not fearing the death which threatened her. And when no priest could be had, she had ever ready words of consolation to assist the dying soul on its way to eternity. When it was forbidden under pain of death to pray to God, or to possess a pious object, these good sisters continued to fulfil their apostolate, and went to prison happy to have accomplished a sacred duty. And if, during the Reign of Terror, priests were able to administer some communions, it was to the children instructed by these chosen souls.'

The praise rendered to these holy daughters is, assuredly, well deserved, for more than one priest owes his life to them during the horrors of the Revolution.

In the absence of the priest they often assembled their neighbours in a barn at the hours of the offices and read aloud the prayers for Mass.

See them still with that seal of piety, charity, simplicity, which P. Eudes engraved on all his works. The majority of them are not rich, they earn their living by daily labour; nevertheless they know how to economise some hours every week to decorate their church or to catechise children. They live in the world which they edify by their virtue. Their dress does not differ from the ordinary, except that they do not wear those frivolities which the world seeks after. One would easily recognise

them by this modest simplicity in the town as well as in the country. One would discern them by their self-sacrifice, living in their family looking after its old members, and taking care of the little children; or they offer themselves as servants to priests more through a spirit of faith than of interest.

The founding of this Society at Rennes dates back to a mission which P. Eudes preached there in the year 1670. It has always prospered from that time, and at present numbers more than one hundred members. It has spread equally well throughout many parishes of this fervent diocese. It is also flourishing in the town of Caen and its suburbs. In the diocese of Vannes, before the Revolution, it was known under the name of Society of the Blessed Virgin. Dispersed though not destroyed in the storm, it was again re-united about the year 1832 by a holy priest, Abbé Eon, Vicar General of Vannes, who directed it for ten years with the greatest zeal. Little by little it increased, and it now numbers more than a million members in the district of Vannes, Questembert, and of Josselin.

In the diocese of Coutances the Third Order of the Sacred Heart has made, for the last twenty-five years, from the time of the arrival of the Eudist missionaries, rapid and continual progress. The sisters are very numerous at Saint-James, Pontorson, Granville, Avranches, and many other parishes.

In the diocese of Nantes thirty of the parishes at

84 THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART

least possess the Tertiaries; and Mgr. Lecoq, convinced that these holy souls were called to render valuable services at that period of general dislocation, has given them a canonical existence and a superior. In fact, it is when religion is banished from the schools and hospitals, that these chosen souls, who possess the religious spirit without the habit, become necessary and should be encouraged.

In the diocese of Laval, Mayenne for the last twenty years possesses a small sodality of the 'Filles du Saint Cœur de Marie.' They number more than forty, and support and encourage each other in the practice of good works. The same can be said of Blois, Angers, and Versailles.

At Paris, the Society is also canonically erected from the year 1874, and is increasing rapidly under the direction of the Eudist Fathers. It is even established in America, in the Antilles, where the Eudists, and particularly a holy bishop of their congregation, Mgr. Poirier, have laboured for a long time.

But nowhere is it more flourishing than in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, which holds the honour of being at the head of all good works.¹ It existed in many parishes before the Revolution, and also in the diocese of Tréguier, which is now united to it. At the revival of religion, Mgr. Caffarelli, Bishop of

¹ In many parishes of this diocese, among the men there are members of this Society; and recently we were told of one who fell a victim, at Erqui, to his self-sacrifice in the midst of a contagious malady.

Saint-Brieuc, knowing the important services the Third Order of the Sacred Heart had rendered to the clergy and to the faithful of his diocese during the persecution, had raised it to the rank of diocesan institution, and named for its superior M. l'Abbé Chantrel. This worthy priest and his successor, M. Delange, heartily undertook the work intrusted to them, and under their direction it developed rapidly. After them, M. l'Abbé Sauchet, Dean of the Chapter, devoted to it all his labours and thoughts. His two works, *Le livre des Vierges et des pieuses Veuves* and *Essai sur la piété bretonne*, have made known and appreciated the Third Order of the Sacred Heart, and have given it a wonderful impetus. Mgr. Bouché, Bishop of Saint-Brieuc, some years ago encouraged and favoured the work of which he himself acknowledged the happy results, and presaged the advantages and the services possible at that unhappy period. We submit gladly to give the circular which His Grace sent to his clergy, and which particularly concerns the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, so numerous in this religious diocese.

‘What good,’ he writes, ‘these holy daughters have performed in the past !

‘What good they can accomplish in the present !

‘On this subject, permit Us to relate here an instance of which We were Ourselves witnesses. During the three years of our vicariate course at Ploubazlanec, we had an opportunity of seeing

the work of these devoted souls: the decoration of the parish church and of the chapels, nursing the sick, assisting the dying, particularly catechising the children; no work of Christian charity was a stranger to them. On Our visits to the dying, day or night, we found at the bedside the "Bonne Sœur," a willing nurse, lavishing her disinterested care, preparing the dying soul to receive the last sacraments, thus making herself the right hand of the priest. When we carried the Holy Viaticum to the dying, We were certain of finding all prepared and the house in good order; a white cloth covered the table on which rested the best crucifix that could be procured in the house or in the village, around it were arranged vases of flowers, and blest candles burned in the best candlesticks that could be had. A gathering of people full of recollection assembled. In awaiting our hidden God, the sister of the Third Order, the Religious of the house, (Léanez ann ti) according to the charming Breton dialect, recited the prayers which were fervently answered by those around. There was no need for the priest to exhort the dying soul, all It heard recalled the great act which was about to be accomplished. And when the last sacraments had been administered by the priest and received by this true Christian with holy resignation, the part of the Bonne Sœur was not yet finished. She remained there forgetful of her own affairs to the end. It was she who supplied

the inexperience of the inmates of the house, interred the body, prepared the mortuary chapel, and carefully looked after the arrangement of the remains. It was she who presided at the vigil and recited the prayers.

‘The good which a parish can draw from the presence of these Sisters of the Third Order is shown still more from another point of view: that of the teaching of catechism. Every evening the village children were united and catechised by the “Bonne Sœur,” with a patience which nothing could affect. And when the names of First Communicants were to be given in, with what pride did she not bring her young pupils to the Curé, assuring him that they knew all or nearly all their catechism! And how happy was the priest to have his children already so well prepared!

‘What I have now written, a little lengthy perhaps, as one of the sweetest souvenirs of my sacerdotal life, is now going on, thank God, in many parishes of this diocese. Ah! how happy would your bishop be to see these useful associations multiplied!’

To this praise, so justly merited, we may add that among these Sisters there have been elect souls who were inspired to found communities now prosperous.

It is to a poor girl of Saint-Quay-Portrieux, in the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, we owe the congregation for teaching dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

88 THIRD ORDER OF THE SACRED HEART

It is to a humble tertiary, Mlle. Amélie Fristel, we owe the founding of the community of Notre Dame des Chênes, at Paramé in the diocese of Rennes. She assisted every year at the retreats preached at Saint-Servan by the superior-general of the Eudists. P. Louis, of whom by letter she often asked advice, having established at Paramé with the aid of other tertiaries a committee of charity, a property called 'des Chênes' was bequeathed to it. She also got up a refuge for old people. Mgr. Saint-Marc, bishop of Rennes, amalgamated with them the Sister Tertiaries scattered among the small country-schools, and from that time they became the Sisters of Jesus and Mary. They wished to take vows, but a decree of the provincial council forbade the erection of new congregations in the diocese. They succeeded, nevertheless, by uniting with some sisters whom a Eudist, Mgr. Poirier, had established at Trinidad. Thus the origin of the religious of Notre Dame des Chênes is truly Eudistine. And also they celebrate, with the children of P. Eudes, the feast of the Heart of Mary on the 8th February.

CHAPTER VIII

WRITINGS OF PÈRE EUDES—HIS LAST YEARS

WE have tried to bring forward the works of P. Eudes, but even yet we fall short of the original; nevertheless does not the sight of so many enterprises undertaken for the greater glory of God surprise us and call forth our admiration?

But we should leave a great vacuum in this life already so well filled, if we did not add that he wrote many books besides those already mentioned. Without giving them in detail, we will name some of them which reveal to us the science and particularly the virtue of this holy man of God. In the first place, in the year 1636, the *Exercices de Piété pour vivre chrétiennement et saintement*, a work which merits its title; the exercises contained in it are full of doctrinal matter and imbued with the unction of the Holy Spirit, to enable the soul to sanctify all the actions of the day.

He published in 1637, *la Vie et le Royaume de Jésus dans les âmes chrétiennes*, an excellent book which shows us the Christian carrying out on this earth the life of Jesus. The principle of the Christian life to which the author invites us is

Jesus living in us by His grace ; the end is Jesus reigning in us by His perfect love ; the means, Jesus again assisting us Himself to sanctify ourselves ; to form it, to increase it, to perfect it in us by all our actions. The whole work is remarkable for its piety, but particularly the eighth book which treats of humility ; it has been printed separately under the well merited title of *Livre d'or*, and the entire work has had numbers of editions during the lifetime as well as after the death of P. Eudes. Two small works appeared in 1641. The first, *Testament de Jésus et le Testament du véritable chrétien* ; it is the smallest of his books, but not the least useful. The second, *Vie du chrétien ou le Catéchisme de la mission*, is an excellent manual not only for mission and priests but also for the faithful. It contains a clear, methodical, and practical explanation of the truths of religion, and valuable advice on the manner of making a general confession.

Shortly afterwards appeared in 1642, *Avertissements aux confesseurs*, in which P. Eudes reveals his theological science, and his delicate tact for directing souls without rigour or effeminacy.

In 1641, he published at Autun a small book on *Dévotion au Cœur de la bienheureuse Vierge, avec l'office du très-saint Cœur*, a work which he republished successively in 1650, 1654, 1663, 1672, always with more numerous additions.

His gratitude for the grace of holy baptism and

the importance he attached to all its obligations induced him to compose the *Contrat de l'homme avec Dieu par le saint baptême* (1654), a work which points out the duties of a Christian and reminds him of his dignity and his hopes. It is related that R. P. Ignace, a Carmelite of consummate virtue, always read this book kneeling—he found in it so much piety and perceived in its pages the expression of the evangelical spirit. At the same time P. Eudes wrote the *Sacrifice de la sainte Messe*, in which he treats of the dignity and sanctity of this all-divine action, and of the interior and exterior dispositions we ought to bring to it. The last part only, *Manière de servir la Messe*, has been printed.

The most useful and practical book published by this holy servant of God was the *Bon Confesseur* (1666), a work which had nine editions during the lifetime of the author, an extraordinary thing at that time. In this book he lays down the qualities suitable for confessors, and all they ought to observe to fulfil worthily their holy ministry. It is one of the first French works on this matter, and notwithstanding many others which have since appeared it is still one of the best on account of the certainty of its doctrine and the wisdom of the rules it contains. The author received congratulations from all sides, and one of the most illustrious Archbishops of France ordered his priests, by a special statute, to read it.

We may mention the *Manuel pour une com-*

munauté ecclésiastique, which is particularly in use among the Eudists (1668). In 1670, the holy author published another book, entitled *Dévotion au Cœur adorable de Jésus*, followed by the Office of the Sacred Heart. Two years later he brought out the book of his *Offices particuliers*, which he composed at different times to be recited by the priests of his Congregation. These offices numbering about twenty-two appeared in one volume, and the corresponding Masses in a smaller volume. All breathes piety and does the greatest honour to P. Eudes.

During the last years of his life, the holy servant of God again published new works: *L'Enfance admirable de la Sainte Vierge*, divided into three parts: the mysteries, the excellence, and the virtues of the holy infancy of Mary, a precious work particularly for the education of the young (1674).

Le Prédicateur Apostolique afterwards appeared, giving to missionaries and priests wise rules to make the Word of God fruitful. Then the *Mémorial de la Vie Ecclésiastique* reminded priests of the sublimity and of the duties of their profession, furnishes pious exercises to enable them worthily to perform their sacerdotal functions, and subjects of meditation for retreats.

This list is already long, but we must add *Tout Jésus*; *l'Homme Chrétien*; *la Sainte Enfance de Jésus*; *l'Office Divin*; *Vie de la Sœur Marie des Vallées*; *Mémoires sur les faveurs accordées par*

la très Sainte Vierge à l'église de Coutances; three volumes of sermons, two volumes of meditations, and many other books remaining in manuscript and unhappily lost, show us clearly that P. Eudes employed all his zeal in forming Christians and priests. Nothing more holy than his works, nourished with the maxims of the Gospel, based on profound theological science, and the fruit of wide experience and frequent meditation. They all speak of his eminent virtue and his ardent zeal for souls.

We cannot pass over in silence the last and most voluminous of his writings, the *Cœur admirable de la Mère de Dieu*, of about 800 pages. This book in which P. Eudes reproduces and develops all he has previously written concerning the Heart of Jesus, and of His Immaculate Mother, is the first work in which the devotion of the Sacred Heart is theologically exposed and masterly defended. The principal aim of the author is to excite in souls a profound veneration for these two incomparable hearts. On a solid doctrine, to a vast ecclesiastical knowledge, he engraves the seal of a tender devotion. On every page the unction of love escapes the heart of our zealous apostle. They are the last outbursts of a soul which is no longer of this earth, but is ready to take flight. It was when finishing the last page of this book, the 25th July 1680, he was attacked by the fever to which he finally succumbed. But let us just return to his last years.

The more he advanced in life, the more did

Providence purify in the crucible of suffering his virtue already so well tried. Persecutions and crosses had never been wanting to him, but they were multiplied during the last days of the life of P. Eudes. Calumnies of every kind were posted in the public squares by the Jansenists and some Oratorians. Defamations even were printed, which the worthy priest thought it better to take no notice of, in order the more to resemble his Divine Master. We have seen how his adversaries after the discovery at Rome of the petition of M. Boniface, thought themselves happy because P. Eudes had lost the esteem of Louis XIV. For six years he endured the disgrace of the king, and greatly feared that his Institute would suffer from it. It was for this reason he availed himself of an opportunity to justify himself with His Majesty, after having suffered this trial with great patience. After many refusals, in the year preceding his death he obtained an audience and was presented to the king by the Archbishop of Paris. He had the consolation of recovering the king's favour which he had unjustly lost. We give P. Eudes' account of the interview: 'Mgr. de Paris placed me in a corner of the room, and when the king entered, he passed right through the Lords and came straight to me looking very pleased. When I began to speak of our affair, he listened to me with attention as if he were pleased with what I had to say.' P. Eudes contented himself with assuring Louis XIV. that M. Boniface

had acted without authority. The king was so struck with the sincerity of the holy priest, and answered him in so cordial a manner, that P. Eudes adds: 'Mgr. de Paris and all the Lords who were present were astonished to see so great a king speak with so much sweetness and goodness to the last of men.'

Thus in spite of his many infirmities, P. Eudes did not fear the long journey in the interests of his congregation. But the reaction followed, and from that time he felt his strength rapidly diminish. Then, weakened by sufferings which were daily increasing, he chose for his coadjutor M. de Bonnefond.

This choice did not please all the members of his Society, so P. Eudes decided to convene a general assembly and tender his resignation. Yielding to his importunities, the assembly elected for superior-general M. Blouet de Camilly, Superior of the Seminary of Coutances and vicar of this diocese. It was a touching spectacle to see the old priest collecting the strength that remained to him, prostrating himself with uncovered head, at the feet of him whom he already considered as his superior and his father, and in this humble posture he begged his blessing, at the same time protesting his respect and his obedience.

From that time P. Eudes thought only of eternity, feeling that his end was near. He had another seizure of the fever which his vigorous constitution

had so long resisted. The fever took a favourable turn; nevertheless he handed a paper to those who attended him, on which he had written the measures they were to take to prepare him for death. He asked particularly to receive the Holy Viaticum while he was yet conscious. It was granted to him, and when he saw our Lord coming into the room nothing could hold him. He got up supported by two of his brethren, knelt down on the floor, and with the ardour of a zeal and devotion which neither age nor sufferings could abate, he asked pardon, and made a touching exhortation to those who surrounded him. The malady increasing, he received Extreme Unction with an angelic fervour. He expired about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, 19th August 1680, in the octave of the Assumption, happy to go and find Her to whom he had consecrated his last labours and his entire life. He wished his remains to be interred in the Church of the Seminary of Caen. It was for this reason, notwithstanding their desires, that the religious of Our Lady of Charity could not obtain his heart.

His wishes were faithfully carried out: 'If I could have my wishes carried out, I should like my body to be interred in our Church of Caen, consecrated to the Heart of Jesus and Mary; but I abandon entirely my body and my soul to the Divine Will, gladly submitting to all It shall ordain for time and eternity, consenting with joy for my body to be reduced to dust. May every grain be as an act of

adoration and praise in honour of the mystery of the burial of our Lord and His holy Mother.'

At the news of the death of P. Eudes, the people came in crowds to bestow the marks of their veneration on the holy servant of God, whose zeal and virtue they had admired so much. The pressure of the crowd was so great that to satisfy the piety of the faithful, his interment was deferred until the third day. A number of the clergy attended the obsequies, and the Bishop of Bayeux, accompanied by his chapter, came to Caen to celebrate a solemn service and attend his funeral oration, which was pronounced by one of his canons.

An historian of the beginning of this century, Hélyot, has written in his *Histoire des Ordres Religieux*: 'The venerable P. Eudes died at Caen on the 19th August 1680. As soon as the news of his death was known, the concourse of the people was so great that it was with difficulty he could be interred. The eagerness of the crowd to render him their last duties, his praises that were heard on all sides, were enough to show, how, in heaven, God honours the creature to whom men have given so much veneration upon earth.'

CHAPTER IX

VIRTUES OF P. EUDES

IN the preceding chapter we have only spoken of the works of P. Eudes, not of his person, sentiments, or virtues. Having tasted the fruit of the tree, we feel assured that it is a fruitful one, but as yet we have only an incomplete knowledge of it.

We will no longer consider the holy servant of God in his active life, or in his apostolical labours, but in his inner, Christian, and sacerdotal life. If he flourished in so marvellous a way during such a withered century, it was because he was solidly grafted on Jesus Christ, the principle of Christian life, the source of every ecclesiastical virtue.

We will then study P. Eudes as a Christian and as a priest: the perfect Christian in the practice of the theological virtues and precepts, and of the evangelical counsels; the model priest in his union with God by prayer, and in his devotedness in preaching and in every work of sacerdotal zeal.

I. THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES—FAITH

Faith is the foundation of all virtue, and if it be not solid the entire building soon gives way.

Unhappily the history of the Church furnishes us with too many proofs. P. Eudes well understood it. Putting in practice the precept of St. Paul, he lived only by faith: 'Justus ex fide vivit.' Faith enlightened his intelligence, warmed his heart, and sanctified all his actions. His thoughts, his words, his actions, were all inspired and regulated by this spirit of faith, the principle of which he had received at baptism, and for which he daily thanked God.

It would be difficult to find a saint more penetrated with gratitude towards God for his birth in the bosom of the Catholic Church. We find superabundant proofs of this in his book, *Contrat de l'homme avec Dieu par le saint baptême*, in the constitutions, in the manual of the Society, in which days are fixed for meditation on the grace of baptism, the renewal of the promises, and for thanking God.

This esteem of holy baptism inspired him with an extreme aversion for the spirit of the world so contrary to the spirit of faith. 'The world,' he said, 'is the greatest enemy of Jesus Christ.' Our Saviour disapproved its life, combated its laws, condemned its maxims, which are infinitely opposed to the doctrine He came to establish on earth. 'Every time we go among men,' he adds, 'we return less a man than before.' The spirit of God is not found among those who are full of the world and its novelties. Penetrated with these principles he looked upon worldliness as a poison against faith, he believed it more deleterious than bad poison or

the grossest sin. In fact, it glides into the very depths of the soul. It weakens more and more the thought of the presence of God, it lessens the idea of His sovereign power, it shakes faith in the authority of the Church.

The venerable Founder had nothing more at heart than to detach from it his brethren and spiritual children. He forbade useless visits and unprofitable conversations. He disapproved of exaggerated terms and the manner of speaking used in the world. 'In your letter,' he wrote to a religious whom he directed, 'a worldly expression escapes you, "*baise-main*." For that you shall make a quarter of an hour's prayer, and kiss the ground as many times as there are words in the phrase: "they are not of the world." ' Worldly fashions, furniture, ways of acting, were held by him in horror, particularly in priests. 'That senseless subjection,' he said, 'is still more culpable in priests who are the salt of the earth, and who ought not to change, after the example of fools, like the moon. What a disorder would it not be if the governors of a town followed a fool through the streets, dressed like him, and imitated his jests!'

He wrote one day to Mme. de Camilly with regard to her daughter: 'Take care lest she should think too much of her enemy, the world; tell her often of its vanities and fashions.'

But P. Eudes emptied his heart of the spirit of the world to fill it with the Spirit of God. He

wished to die to creatures, but it was only in order to live a holy life. Once in confidence he told one of his children that he always felt in the presence of God, and that by a particular grace he referred to Him even his commonest actions. One of his ejaculations was: 'Good Jesus, nothing for me, nothing for the world, but all for Thee, O my Saviour.' He advised these words to be said at awakening: 'I renounce Satan and attach myself to Thee, my Jesus'; and it is very likely it was one of his daily practices. Whoever has read the *Manuel des Eudistes*, or any other work of this holy servant of God, can see how he sanctified every circumstance of his life, sleep as well as labour, health as well as illness, rest as well as journeyings.

But if the faith of P. Eudes was so practical it was not the less ardent. How great was his zeal for the propagation of the Holy Gospel and for the defence of the true doctrine! He undertook missions in town and country, it was his delight to catechise children, he laboured with untold zeal for the conversion of heretics, and at the closing up of certain missions we can number thirty or forty abjurations; but it was little for him. He longed to carry the Gospel everywhere, to shed his blood for his faith, as is proved by the following vow, the last lines of which he wrote with his blood: 'O my God, if an occasion was presented to me and I was obliged to die, or renounce Thy holy faith, or perform any important act against Thy divine will,

I vow and promise, as firm and constant as it would be possible to me, confiding in Thy divine goodness and in the assistance of thy grace, to confess, recognise, and adore Thee before the whole world at the price of my blood, of my life, of all the martyrdoms and tortures imaginable, to suffer a thousand deaths and all the torments of earth and hell, rather than to deny Thee, or do any important act against Thy divine will.'

The liveliness of his faith is still shown to us by his zeal against innovators. Skilful in discovering the germs of the seed of pride, which, coming from the hands of Luther and Calvin, produced such an abundant and desolating harvest, he was always a zealous adversary to rash opinions. The Jansenists equally, those unhappy stoics strayed from a religion of love, had never a more rigid censor. It was through his zeal in following them that he drew their indignation upon himself, and instead of a martyrdom of love he endured a martyrdom of persecution all his life. He openly declared that 'he and his congregation were as removed from Jansenism as heaven is from hell; that he was as much opposed to it as fire is to water; that the greatest misfortune that could happen to a town or diocese, would be to place the seminary under the guidance of a person infected with this bad doctrine.'

Mgr. de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, made him take a seat in his carriage with a priest, who, he said, was a Jansenist. 'Ah, Monseigneur,' cried P.

Eudes, 'allow me to get down, please. Coachman, stop!' 'No, I forbid you,' said the prelate, who was amused at his embarrassment.

This repulsion against innovators explains to us how, in his numerous writings, he was able to defend himself entirely from all the new ideas which were gliding in everywhere, and even penetrated into the oratory as well as in many other communities, and left behind them marks yet scarcely effaced. At Rome all the works of P. Eudes have been submitted to a most minute examination, and have served but to show forth the purity of his faith. Nothing proves it better or is more glorious for our holy apostle than the decree given by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1882: 'Ex documentis productis minime inferri potest V.S.D. Eudes gallicanismi doctrinis quomodocumque indulsisse, proinde nihil obstat quominus procedi possit ad ulteriora.' 'From the documents submitted to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, it is absolutely impossible to infer that the venerable servant of God was in the slightest degree inclined towards the doctrine of Gallicanism, therefore nothing stands in the way of further proceedings.'

HOPE

If P. Eudes was animated with a lively faith, he had also a firm hope. We see it in his excellent book, *Contrat de l'homme avec Dieu par le saint baptême*,

in which he brings before us, at the same time as our obligations and engagements, the promises of a God who is Truth itself. We have also another proof in his horror of the Jansenist doctrine. It was repugnant to him to see any limit put to the goodness, the mercy, the love of God; and it was the delight of this zealous missionary to show forth in preaching the love and mercy of God; to show Jesus Christ on the cross with His arms extended towards the extremities of the earth, His heart open to all men; to present the two Hearts of Jesus and Mary as two fountains of grace and two sources of trust and confidence. Rather let us look at the offices he has composed for the feasts of the Sacred Hearts: 'Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who are carried by my bowels, are borne up by my womb. Even to your old age I am the same, and to your grey hairs I will carry you: I have made you and I will bear: I will carry and will save.'—Isaiah xli. 3, 4. And again: 'Can a woman forget her infant so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? yea, and if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee.'—Isaiah xlix. 15.

For the future life, P. Eudes hoped for the reward promised to the good and faithful servant, 'I am thy reward exceeding great.'—Gen. xv. 1. In his last illness he was asked if he did not fear death and the judgments of God. 'I have great reason to fear,' he answered, 'but I trust in the mercy of my

God, and the infinite merits of my Saviour, I hope in the goodness of His blessed Mother.'

It was this assurance of a better life which supported him in all his undertakings, detached him from all creatures, and sweetened the bitterness of life. 'How could we not hope?' he was wont to say, 'was not Jesus Christ given to us by the Eternal Father to be our redemption, our justice, our virtue, our sanctification, our treasure, our strength, our life, and our all?' And again, 'Why has Jesus Christ in the Scriptures taken the qualities of friend, advocate, physician, shepherd, brother, father, spouse of our souls? Why does He call us His flock, His children, His portion, His inheritance, His soul, and His heart? Is it not to strengthen our confidence in His goodness?'

In suffering or in temptation never did P. Eudes yield to discouragement, but he repeated: 'In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped and I shall not be confounded.' When his Institutes were reduced to the last extremities he lost nothing of his confidence, but hoped against hope.

During one of his trials he wrote to P. de Bonnefond: 'Where can one find a faithful friend? Ah! it is the easiest thing in the world. Let us love Jesus, Son of Mary, and Mary, Mother of Jesus. Let us place all our confidence in them, they will show forth their power and their goodness.' At another time: 'Let us rather lose all, than lose one spark of the confidence we ought to have in Jesus

and Mary for our Congregation, a goodness which they have shown in so many ways.' He writes again to the same: 'I hope so much about your affair because you find so many difficulties. If in the works of God, we draw back on account of obstacles and difficulties, we shall never do anything.' The more affairs were thwarted the more he counted on success. 'They are the interests of God,' he would say, 'He shall make them succeed according to His good Will.' Divine Providence was pleased to realise in the midst of the greatest trials the hopes he had conceived, and reward his blind confidence and filial abandonment.

CHARITY

Jesus Christ Himself speaks of charity as being the greatest of his commandments; it approaches nearest to the Divinity, says St. Thomas, and is the most excellent of all the virtues. And St. Paul says: 'If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.'—Cor. xiii. 3. In all the saints this charity shines with more or less *éclat*. It is the same with the saints of the Church of God as it is with the stars of the firmament which are not all alike in greatness or in light. Though charity be the principle of all sanctity, it is not the less true that with a St. Francis Xavier it is specially manifested with an ardent zeal, with a St. Francis Assisi by penance,

with a St. Vincent de Paul by love of one's neighbour, with a St. Francis de Sales by sweetness. We have reason to believe that in the venerable servant of God, P. Eudes, the virtue which has been the most striking is the love of God, an impetuous insatiable love, and particularly the love of God through the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, as we have already mentioned, and is proved by the attribute with which he is represented, namely, a heart in his hand. P. Eudes loved God, *corde magno et animo volenti*. He consecrated to God all his thoughts, all his affections, all his actions.

All the thoughts of P. Eudes were for God, and it had become such a familiar practice with him that he was not distracted even by exterior occupations. The sight of creatures and of all the objects of this visible world served but to raise his soul to the Creator; they seemed to say to him: Love God who is all love for thee.

All the affections of P. Eudes were for God. 'Ah, my sweet love,' he would say, 'what can hinder me from loving Thee? Shall it be my body? I shall reduce it into dust; or my past sins? I shall wash them in Thy Precious Blood; behold, I offer Thee my body and my soul; let me suffer all that shall please Thee to wash them out entirely, so that they may not be a hindrance to my loving Thee. Shall it be the world or creatures? I renounce with all my heart all the sensible affections of created things. O Love! O Love! to die or to love, but

rather to die and to love. O Love! O Love! no more ingratitude, no more offence, no more sin, no more infidelity, nothing but love.'

Such were the burning exclamations that escaped from his heart.

'O Heaven!' he continues, 'how desirable thou art! There, God is loved perfectly, there the love of God reigns absolute. In Heaven there is no heart that is not transformed into this divine love. O earth! O world! O body! obscure prison of my soul, how insupportable thou art! Must I still dwell in this miserable exile, in this abode of sin and malediction? Shall not the day soon come, the hour, the moment, so desirable and so long desired, when I shall begin to love my God perfectly? Ah! my God, shall I ever love Thee as much as I long to do?'

To multiply these quotations it suffices to open any of the works of P. Eudes, transcribe his letters, or the offices he has composed.

Lastly, P. Eudes consecrated to God, all his actions, not only his incessant labours, his preachings, his apostolic course, the hours passed in the confessional or in the accomplishment of his duties as a priest or as a Christian, but the commonest actions, as eating or drinking; 'of which we must make,' he would say, 'as many acts of praise to the Blessed Trinity for having given us a Man-God, Jesus, and Mary, who had to do like us the same actions on earth.' He unceasingly renewed this

offering to God of all his actions, which he conformed to God's good pleasure. 'Live Jesus!' he would frequently say, 'Live the Blessed Will of my Jesus! May mine be destroyed, and the Will of my Jesus reign in me and be done upon earth as it is in heaven.' He began his work with this prayer: 'My God, if it be pleasing to Thee, I wish to place all my satisfaction in doing this because it is Thy Will.'

When it was a question of buying a house, for the seminary of Caen, after having prescribed his brethren to celebrate three novenas of Masses, he distributed to them billets, on one side of which was written a prayer to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and on the other these words: 'I ask Thee, Lord, and I desire with all my heart that Thy adorable Will be accomplished in me and in all creatures according to Thy good pleasure.' He asked these billets to be placed over the heart with the intention of offering oneself at every breath to the Divine Will. In the same sentiments he recommended his children to begin their letters with these words: 'May the Will of God be our guide in all things.' It was assuredly his rule, for he had engaged himself by vow to act, at least in things of importance, according to what was most conformable to the Divine Will.

To love God, to make Him be loved, such was his only ambition. If he met a pious person of his acquaintance his first question generally was, 'Well, do you love God?' Nothing pained him more than

the little love shown by men for God. When he rendered a service he asked for reward only a little of this love. He wished all creatures, even the inanimate, to be as so many hearts to love God, and, as languages, to sing His praises. He saw them clothed with His beauty and His goodness. It seemed to him that the Creator had stamped on every object: Love God who is all love for us.

But it was particularly in the hearts of his children he wished divine love to reign. 'The rule of rules,' he says in his Constitution, 'is charity.' The only aim of the children of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, their only intention in all their actions and exercises, shall be to perform them not through fear of punishment, or through a desire of reward, nor for merit, nor for their own satisfaction, nor to please men, but solely for the glory of God, to please Him and to do His holy Will.

If he has not prescribed vows for his Congregation, if he has not imposed upon them rules binding under sin, it is in order to make them act through love of God. Nevertheless, the true children of the Congregation ought not to have less zeal and affection in keeping these rules, in order to exercise by these means the love we owe to God. If we were obliged, under pain of death or eternal damnation, to keep these Constitutions, most undoubtedly we would do it, and it would be fear that would make us do it. Now the Holy Ghost tells us that love is stronger than death, and zeal harder than hell. It is why, if

we truly love God, and are zealous^t for His glory, we would observe them with as much care and exactitude for love of Him, and that He might be glorified in the Congregation, as we would do it through fear of death or hell.'

RELIGION

The virtue of religion flows naturally from the theological virtues which it supposes, and is the necessary consequence. By it we render to God the worship and reverence which are due to Him, we respect the persons and things which brings it to our minds.

P. Eudes, in the chapter of his Constitutions which treats of this virtue, begins thus: 'The virtue of religion shall be exercised firstly and principally, in regard of the Blessed Trinity, considering and adoring It as the source and centre of all things, as the model of all holy communities. Every time the august name of the Blessed Trinity is heard or pronounced, the head should be uncovered; if it is uncovered an inclination should be made as an act of homage in honour of this great mystery.' He had also a particular love and respect for our Lord Jesus Christ and the mysteries of His life and death. He loved to repeat this short prayer: 'O Jesus, be to me a Jesus, and I shall be happy no matter what may befall me.' In the same strain he wrote one day to a religious, 'It is not in created or perishable things we must look for

happiness, but in Jesus, our Saviour. He is my all, and I wish nothing but Him. Adieu, to everything else; my Jesus is my all, and I desire to be all His.' What loving respect for the holy name of Jesus is shown in these words of P. Eudes: 'At every beating of my heart, as long as my tongue can speak and my hand write, I shall never preach or write anything but Jesus; and I desire to have life, understanding, speech, or a pen only to pronounce and to write the wonders and mercies of this glorious Name. Ah! who can give me a tongue and pen, seraphic and divine, worthily to pronounce and to write this holy Name!' Guided by these sentiments, P. Eudes composed for the feast of the Holy Name an entire office, whose hymns, as we have seen, are of incomparable sweetness.

Full of devotion for the mysteries of our Lord's life, he divided the year into different periods in order to honour His hidden and public life. Speaking one day of the Holy Infancy, he cried out: 'Why is it not in my power, O holy Infant Jesus, to hide Thee from all the Herods who seek Thee only to put Thee to death. It is true,' he added, 'that there are none here, but there are many elsewhere.'

Every Friday he consecrated to the mystery of the Passion and Death of our Lord; he always carried a crucifix which he would lovingly kiss. On Good Friday he assembled his community to render the last duties to Jesus expiring on the cross.

Until his last breath, he ever preserved for the Blessed Eucharist the reverence and love of his early years. Before the Tabernacle he sought consolation in his trials, laid open his heart, and found strength in his difficulties. He exacted the greatest respect for this divine mystery.

The religious of Val-Richer wrote at his death: 'He edified us in a singular manner, particularly when he was in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament; his hands joined, his countenance serene, his body immovable. We were so accustomed to speak of him with respect and veneration that some of the novices went into the sacristy while he was saying Mass, and cut buttons off his coat to keep as relics.'

At the closing of the mission of Saint-Lô, where the Blessed Sacrament was passing he remarked a crowd standing, and cried with holy indignation, 'Kneel down, worms of the earth who are but dust, kneel down before your King!' Instantly all knelt down though the ground was very wet.

He wrote a book on the manner of hearing and serving Mass; charged one of his priests during his mission to teach the children to answer well and behave properly in the church; he frequently preached against irreverence in the House of God, and posted warnings on the church doors on this subject.

It is true that at that time the churches were not respected; we give the following lines taken from

the *Royaume de Jésus*, by P. Eudes: 'Frequently one would see dogs coming even to the foot of the altar, disturbing the Divine service, and barking so continuously that the preacher had often to cease speaking. And not only were they allowed to remain, but many persons brought them in, and sometimes even they were carried.'

We can easily understand the indignation of the holy servant of God, at such disorders. Full of veneration for every one consecrated to God, he would not suffer a priest to speak to him uncovered; and if he saw one standing during his sermons he would stop and ask a seat to be given to him.

We have not yet convinced ourselves of the extraordinary devotion of P. Eudes for the Blessed Virgin whom he called his good mistress, the Mother of beautiful dilection. He carried his rosary attached to his belt so that he might have it always at hand; he frequently kissed the medals, and being asked one day the reason, he answered, smiling: 'I am in love; ardent lovers embrace fragile beauty which is only imaginary or fictitious; what ought not I to do for such a lovely Mistress as mine is?' He often said: 'If I knew a person to love Mary more than I did, were I a hundred miles away I would go and find that person to learn how to love Her better.' From his infancy he was a member of the congregation of the Blessed Virgin. Later on he wished to celebrate his first Mass in a church dedicated to the Mother of God; it was at the foot

of an altar of the Queen of Heaven, Notre-Dame de la Délivérande, that he assembled the members of his congregation.

To honour Mary and promote her devotion, he adopted in his houses, by permission, all the feasts celebrated in her honour in the church ; he composed particular offices for all her feasts, and prescribed his priests not to preach a mission without bringing forward devotion to the Immaculate Mother of God. To increase devotion to Mary in his children he recommended them to end all their prayers by the stanza ‘*Monstra te esse matrem*’ repeated three times, and to keep in their room a picture of the Mother of God, particularly one representing her with her divine Son.¹

The same zeal prompted him during his missions to restore many churches of our Blessed Lady. First, he built a church consecrated to the Heart of Mary at Coutances, as we have already noted, and he inscribed on the frontispiece: ‘It is through Mary this church has been erected.’ He also composed in her honour a salutation still in use among his children beginning with the words: ‘*Ave Maria, filia Dei Patris.*’ After his death it was found entirely written in his blood.

We may here relate a remarkable fact which happened in 1670. P. Eudes visiting the Ursulines

¹ It is related that he often repeated the distich :

‘*Pingenti solam sine Nato Mater aiebat :
Me sine me potius pingē, dolebo minus.*’

at Lisieux, knelt down as was his custom before every statue of Our Lady he met in the house. He conversed with the Superior on the protection which this good Mother grants to all who serve Her, and for nearly quarter of an hour he remained in ecstasy. When he recovered his senses, the Superior said to him: 'Oh, father, the Blessed Virgin has been here!' 'It is true,' answered P. Eudes, adding that when she approached him he was ravished, and that she called him by the names of servant, son, father, spouse, with inexpressible sweetness. But fearing he had said too much, he commanded her to keep it as an absolute secret, which M. Renée de Sainte Agnès believed herself obliged to keep during the lifetime of the venerable servant of God.

He always longed to die on a day consecrated to Mary. And it was during the octave of the Assumption he was called away; clothed in the livery of our good Mother, as he himself had expressed the desire in his last will: 'I beseech my brethren to bury me in the white habit of my blessed Mother, with the white silk sash and cross of red silk, and also the alb which I have marked for this purpose, with the scapular and the rosary which was given to me by Sœur Marie, with the original of my will of which this copy shall remain, with the contract of the alliance I made to the Blessed Virgin, and particularly with her holy image which is partly made of relics, and which is in a small niche of gilded copper.'

After the Blessed Virgin he had a great devotion to the angels, whom he called the great ones of heaven, the princes of the celestial court. He particularly honoured St. Gabriel, because of his intimate relations with our Lord and His blessed Mother. He also prayed with great fervour to his guardian angel, the patrons of the parishes where he gave missions, and of the places through which he passed.

Among the saints he venerated more particularly those who belonged to the Holy Family, or who were most closely associated with them during the hidden life; he composed a salutation in honour of St. Joseph, which the Eudists recite every evening; St. Joachim and St. Anne, the parents of our Blessed Lady; Lazarus, the friend of our Lord; St. John the Evangelist, his patron and our representative on Calvary: holy priests and apostles whose example he considered most profitable to the members of his congregation.

He extended his veneration to the holy relics, particularly those of the martyrs, thus seeking to repair the profanations of which they had been the object during the preceding century. Not only did he always carry some about him, but he tried to procure some for all his houses, as the most precious of treasures, which he ordered to be kept under lock and key, lest any particle of them might be lost. On their journeys to Rome the PP. de Bonnefond and Mannoury procured some relics which gave

greater pleasure to P. Eudes than all the riches of the world could afford. He established a solemn feast in his Congregation to honour them, and composed a Mass and office proper.

II. MORAL VIRTUES—HUMILITY

‘Give me a soul that is humble,’ said P. Eudes, ‘and I will tell you it is holy; if it is truly humble it is truly holy; if it is very humble it is very holy and adorned with every virtue.’

In truth, humility is the foundation of every virtue, and is the infallible mark of a Christian. It is the submission to God of the entire being; of the mind which recognises its nothingness and its abjection; the heart which, far from being afflicted, loves its abjection and thanks its Benefactor. Nothing then can be more agreeable to God than this virtue, which is composed of truth united to gratitude.

To keep to this order of ideas, we will say that P. Eudes understood his nothingness and loved humiliations. He knew he was nothing by himself, he repeated every morning, ‘I know of myself I can do nothing,’ and he inspired his brethren with the same sentiments by making them say with him: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, we are nothing, we can do nothing, we are worth nothing, we have nothing but sin, we are useless servants, children of wrath by nature, the last of men and the first of sinners; to us then, confusion and ignominy, to Thee honour and

glory for ever and ever, Amen.' If he spoke thus it was because he felt his weakness, adding: 'No one but God can understand my nothingness, and no evil can happen to me which I do not well deserve.'

Never did he prefer himself to anyone, even to the greatest sinners. 'If they had received the same graces as I have,' he would say, 'they would be incomparably better; if God had abandoned me to myself, sin would have exercised over me the same tyranny as it does over the demons.'

Such were the sentiments of P. Eudes; he unceasingly sought for humiliations and rejected honours. Preaching a retreat to a community at Paris, and remarking the esteem in which he was held, it humbled him, and he left on the table of his room a writing in which he spoke of himself as a peasant. During a mission at Valognes a painter was sent to take his portrait; P. Eudes was put about and hastened to dismiss the artist.

But glory is like a shadow, it follows those who fly from it. The Bishop of Evreux, Mgr. de Maupas, wished him to be his coadjutor and took some steps with the king, who believed it more advantageous for P. Eudes to apply himself to missionary work. The correspondence of P. Eudes on this occasion shows us his humility and his desire to remain in a less brilliant position. 'The fear I have had until now,' he wrote, 'of resisting the Will of God in this affair, had obliged me to suffer all that has been said and done on that

account. But the very clear view that I have of my own great, my very great, of my infinite unworthiness, and the apprehension of having to answer to God for the salvation of so many souls, forces me to declare from the very depths of my heart, that I wish no other privilege than that chosen for me by my Saviour, His Cross.'

He feared, above all, honours and esteem, and sought only rebuffs and humiliations. He was delighted one day when he heard that a gentleman at whose door he had knocked, had answered: 'Tell that man that I do not wish to hear of him, that I would rather he were hung on a gibbet than be at my door.'

The humble sentiments he had of himself he also had of his works, even of his congregation, prescribing his confrères to esteem it less than all others, though they should love it more.

PURITY

If it be true that man strays away from God by pride, it is equally true that he does so by sensuality. Experience proves that these two faults are equally connected, for he who acts independently of God soon finds out his own weakness and wallows in the mire. He who exalts himself shall be humbled; on the contrary he who humbles himself shall be exalted, and God gives His grace to the humble and enables them to be the masters of their passions.

With the aid of grace P. Eudes knew so well how to govern all his senses, that, among his insulters, no one could impute the smallest suspicion of the pureness of his life. We have seen that from the age of fourteen, he had embraced the vow of chastity, and that he had been firm in refusing an eligible alliance.

One day it happened to him that during a conversation he assured them that for the twenty-five years he had been a priest, he had never without necessity looked about him in the church. Then fearing to have given too good an opinion of himself he added: 'That is nothing; nevertheless I say it to let you see that it is easy to do this when one wishes.'

To preserve his children from even the appearances of evil, he forbade women to enter the community, except princesses or great benefactresses, and these could not enter unaccompanied. There should be an apartment open to view near the door to receive other persons.

Then he passes on to Sobriety. It was the principal means he took to preserve chastity, knowing that the vice contrary to it was the bait usually employed. He never used anything but common food, and he also recommended his brethren to confine themselves to strict necessity. During the mission of Valognes the brother had served fish on a Friday evening. P. Eudes strongly reprimanded him, and ordered him never to leave on the table

anything but eggs or vegetables. The P. Manchon, next to him in authority, laughingly said one day that he had eaten some strawberries while walking in the garden after dinner. 'That is not a light fault,' immediately answered P. Eudes; 'do not fail to humble yourself and do penance for it.' He also forbade them after a meal to speak of what had been served, or to go to the kitchen to see what was being prepared.

It was in mortifying the taste, the sight, and all the exterior senses, as well as the imagination and curiosity that he preserved in his mortal flesh the purity of an angel.

LOVE OF ONE'S NEIGHBOUR

P. Eudes, though not easy of access and his conversation habitually grave, showed a great affability, particularly with his confrères. He gained their confidence by the cordial affection which he showed for them.

He laid down his fraternal charity as the foundation of his congregation. 'It should be,' he says, 'the soul which animates it, guides and rules all things.' In the desire of seeing it reign among his brethren, he devoted five chapters of his constitutions to the means of sustaining it between the houses and between their members. He, so utterly indifferent as to himself, so imprudent when it was a question of assisting the plague-stricken, watched with maternal care over his children when they were ill.

‘I am expecting news from you every day, my dear Brother,’ he wrote to a superior of the seminary of Rouen; ‘for I am very much concerned about you and all our dear brethren from the first to the last. We pray for you, and I have written to all our houses to do the same, and to place you under the protection of our Blessed Lady.’ We see the same solicitude in a letter written to the superior of a mission: ‘I recommend to you the health of our dear brethren; and on this account arrange so that all may leave the church at the same hour, take their repast at the same time; let those who are inconvenienced say the morning Mass, and above all let all retire at nine in order to take the rest which is necessary.’

The sick were the object of his particular tenderness; he wished nothing to be spared for their comfort. He would say that if it were necessary the silver of the church should be sold to give them assistance. ‘My dear Brother,’ he wrote one day to an invalid, ‘do not be disturbed, if it is necessary to sell the chalices to cure you it shall be done.’ He even wished that they should be amused, take change of air, little attentions paid to them. But if he had so great an affection for his suffering brethren, he had not less for strangers when he could assist them. It is useless to repeat what he did in his own country and at Caen for the plague-stricken.

The charity of P. Eudes in regard to the poor

was also very remarkable. It was his delight to give them spiritual assistance. All his preferences were for the miserable. It made him happy to see his confrères give precedence to the poor rather than to the rich. 'These,' he would say, 'find plenty of directors; the souls of the poor are abandoned as well as their bodies.' Hearing one day one of his missionaries say that he had not left the confessional from six to eleven o'clock, he asked him: 'Have you heard many of the poor?' 'Father, I have heard none others, my confessional was near the door and the poor all stopped there.' 'May you be blessed,' added P. Eudes, 'God shall be your reward.' His vigilant care for their material needs was not less than his solicitude for their spiritual needs. He knew how to deprive himself for them, and had the habit of saying: 'When one has a charitable heart for the poor, means to assist them are easily found.' He made a regulation in his constitutions that every Sunday and Thursday a poor person should be given a dinner, and twelve should be assembled together frequently during the year; it was his happiness to serve them. At Caen he publicly gave alms twice a week, and every Friday he sent two of the priests or students to visit the hospitals or prison. At different times at Paris and at Caen, recourse was had to him for charity sermons, to obtain alms for the indigent and for the hospitals; he always did it with great alacrity and met with success.

The charity of P. Eudes extended even to his persecutors and enemies. Not only did he pardon his calumniators but he called them his 'good friends.' He never was insulted without praying and asking prayers for those who had injured him.

We give the words by which he begins the list of founders and benefactors: 'All those who have opposed, contradicted, or afflicted us, we place in the rank of signal benefactors, because they have assisted us to humble and to mortify ourselves, and gave us the occasion of enriching ourselves with grace and heavenly blessings by the practice of many virtues.' Here is what he says in his Will: 'I say to my Heavenly Father from the bottom of my heart for all those who have offended me, if, indeed, such a miserable sinner as I could be offended: "*Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt quid faciunt.*"'

Thus, when he felt grateful to his persecutors, how much more to those who conferred favours on him. Every day he prayed and asked prayers for the benefactors of his Institute, and their names are recorded in a register which is still extant. We have also many proofs of his gratitude in the following passage of the constitutions: 'In every house a number of Masses, fixed by the visitor, shall be offered for the benefactors. Every one should remember them in particular, at his Mass and at his prayers. Every evening an Ave Maria

shall be said in common. They shall participate in all the prayers and good works which shall be done, by the grace of God, in the community. At the death of founders as many Masses and as many prayers shall be offered as for the members of the congregation; and for benefactors and friends Masses and prayers shall be said according to the obligation due to them.' We read in another chapter: 'When a member of the congregation dies, it shall be made known as soon as possible to all the houses. Each priest shall celebrate three Masses for the repose of his soul; each clerk and brother shall offer three Holy Communions, and shall say a rosary for the same intention.'

Thus P. Eudes had a heart full of affection, compassion, and gratitude; he was always ready to render a service even to his greatest enemies.

PATIENCE

It is impossible to do good without meeting with contradictions of every kind. The history of those holy persons who lived during the seventeenth century furnishes us with many examples. The worthy P. Bérulle was scoffed at, pointed out in the streets, calumniated, treated as a heretic, outraged in France, his character blackened at Rome. St. Frances de Chantal encountered every calumny that the evil passion of man could suggest. St. Vincent de Paul was often treated like his Divine Master, in spite of all his charity towards

his neighbour. Even S. Francis de Sales, who was so sweet and amiable, met with enemies and persecutors who censured his holiest actions, by following him with bitter words and disobliging actions.

It could not be otherwise with the V. P. Eudes, who, during his whole life made war against passions, zealously defended the holy doctrine against the Huguenots and Jansenists, undertook to reform the clergy and snatch many poor souls from vice. He naturally excited the hate of heretics, relaxed priests, and libertines. He met also with adversaries among the Oratorians, who were incensed at the departure of so distinguished a missionary, or who were carried away by the new schisms to which P. Eudes was an indefatigable adversary. We cannot write down all the attacks and incessant calumnies he had to suffer, besides the obstacles which were raised against his works. At every step of his life he met a new cross.

During his missions the servant of God met with hindrances and cabals. It is written that at Plouër he was treated as antichrist, a seducer, a sorcerer. It is the evil one, who, foreseeing a great good that would be done for the glory of God, would not leave the party without strong resistance. When he came to Saint-Lô to open a mission, he there found an emissary from the Jansenists with the intention of drawing away the Catholics. He soon made him leave through fear of a dispute, but not

before he had preached against the mission and left nothing undone to put down the missionaries.

Amid these circumstances, P. Eudes preserved all the tranquillity of his soul and responded to the injury only by preaching with greater zeal the word of God. 'There have been missions,' says P. Martine, 'when everyone was so prejudiced against the missionaries that no one would give them a lodging; they have been so cried down that on arriving they found themselves the subject of the railleries of the whole district.'

When establishing the institute of Our Lady of Charity, the holy missionary met with difficulties of every kind. Sometimes he was abandoned even by those to whom he had confided its direction; disapproved of by prudent persons following the world which hoped for nothing from spoiled and inconstant creatures; followed by libertines who were furious to see the objects of their brutal passions torn from them. He had foreseen all these oppositions. He did not ignore that such is the lot of all holy enterprises, and that without the cross there is no solid foundation.

Notwithstanding, it is difficult to conceive all he had to suffer. Implacable enemies blackened his character with Mgr. Molé, bishop of Bayeux, to such a degree that this prelate formally forbade him to occupy himself with the community of which he was the founder, and forbade him to enter the house. Certainly nothing could be more keenly felt by

P. Eudes, but he was so dead to self-love that he permitted no retaliation.

What opposition did he not meet with when establishing his Congregation? After murmurs and underhand dealings came calumnies of every kind. He was treated as a deceitful, proud, independent man, and even as a robber. His former confrères and the innovators raised up against him such a violent storm, that nearly everyone abandoned him, and even his children feared the congregation would fall through. But P. Eudes remained as immovable as a rock; keeping an unalterable peace and serenity in the midst of all these vexations; his eyes fixed on the crucifix with calmness he continued his way. 'Who can tell,' he writes in his *Memoir*, 'all it was necessary to suffer for the establishing of the Congregation, and in every way and from all sides and for nearly thirty-six years? Have we not been abandoned sometimes even by our best friends? Have we not been calumniated by innumerable defamations? The world and hell have used all their endeavours to annihilate this Community in its infancy. But what are all the forces of the universe against a worm of the earth, an atom, which is in the hands of the Almighty and under the protection of the Queen of Heaven? The more the works of God participate in the cross of His Divine Son, the more do they participate in the graces and blessings which flow from it.' P. Eudes was cried down so far that there was not a single

one left to defend him, and he was rejected everywhere.

One day he went to the house of a gentleman to solicit a favour ; but he, taking him by the hand, conducted him into the midst of the people, deriding him in their presence as though he were a fool. But the holy man kept silence after the example of his Divine Master, happy the more to resemble Him. Nevertheless of all the persecutions raised up against him he felt none more keenly than the interdict issued by Mgr. Molé on the chapel of the Eudists at Caen. This act threatened even the existence of his Congregation ; moreover, this prelate went so far as to meditate on its destruction. P. Eudes accepted this new trial with entire submission to God's Holy Will. 'My very dear Brother,' he writes to P. Manchon, 'it is a storm that will pass. If anything is said to you, do not answer ; if you are commanded to close the church, close it, and say Mass wherever you can. Encourage our brethren ; exhort them to humble themselves before God, and to place all their confidence in Him and His Blessed Mother ; to employ the most time possible before the Blessed Sacrament, and send some one to Notre Dame de la Délivérande.'

The enemies of P. Eudes, not content with having raised up against him such an unjust persecution, continued to publish defamations. Challenged by the superior of the seminary of Rouen to justify himself, he answered : 'Your zeal and goodness are

very laudable ; but, as I cannot find in the Gospel that our Divine Saviour employed the way and means you point out to me in your letter to defend Himself against the injustice and cruelty of the Jews, I can resolve to do nothing except to imitate his patience and his silence ; *Jesus autem tacebat*. Perhaps some one shall answer these calumnies. However it may be, I embrace with all my heart all the crosses it shall please God to send me, and I beseech Him to pardon those who persecute me. The least of my sins merits a thousand times more.' In truth, this is the man, who, when a boy nine years of age, turned his other cheek to his smiter. Some years later he had again occasion to write : 'Crosses are not wanting to me. I heard yesterday that new calumnies have been published against me ; Blessed be God ! I beseech Him to make great saints of all my persecutors, or I should rather call them my benefactors.' In 1674, and during the following years, a great number of writings were again published against this holy priest, which followed him even until death. He was treated as a visionary, as a superstitious man substituting trivial practices for a solid piety. All these crosses were for the holy servant of God as so many new sources of merit. 'The grace of graces,' he would say, 'and the strength of strengths is the multitude of crosses my adorable Jesus, the Crucified, has given me. May He be eternally praised and glorified !'

But if P. Eudes had such admirable patience

during all his interior trials, he had not less in bodily sufferings. Tried by severe illnesses at different periods of his life, overwhelmed with infirmities and pain during his last years, he would repeat: 'Ah, does not the Divine Will dispose of all things in the best manner? Let us abandon ourselves entirely into His hands for health or for sickness, for life or for death, for time and eternity.

III. SACERDOTAL VIRTUES

We have now shown in P. Eudes the virtues of a perfect Christian. We will now equally admire in him those of a perfect priest. Let us follow him then for a moment in his relations with God and his neighbour.

RELATIONS WITH GOD

The priest ought to be a man of prayer; for it is only inasmuch as the priest becomes detached from creatures and united to God that he draws down God's grace upon himself and his ministry. 'Without prayer no piety,' as P. Eudes so well says, 'and what would a priest be without piety? If you wish to know what is piety,' he said one day to his scholars, 'exercise yourselves in mental prayer, and you will know and shall soon possess it. But in proportion as you do not advance in prayer, you will not attain true piety, and you will not be suitable for the ecclesiastical functions whose end is to destroy sin and establish virtue in souls.'

P. Eudes devoted an hour in the morning to

prayer, and he prescribed to all his houses the same. Hearing that in one of his seminaries the diocesan authority wished only half-an-hour's meditation for the students, he was grieved and wrote to the superior: 'Without prayer, my very dear Brother, it is impossible that a congregation can subsist in that spirit of piety and virtue which is necessary to it. To make half-an-hour's meditation or to make none at all is almost the same thing; and nevertheless there is nothing more necessary for scholastics. And also I do not know any seminary which gives only half-an-hour to this exercise. If, however, it is absolutely wished to give only half-an-hour to the students, I beg of you to arrange that our brethren may be allowed a full hour; otherwise it would be better to give up the seminary.'

It was from prayer he drew forth the consolation and patience he needed in the midst of his trials. 'A thousand years of the pleasures of this world,' he says, 'are not worth a moment of the sweetness tasted by the soul in commune with God. By this holy exercise it possesses God and is possessed by Him; he takes complacency in it and it in Him. One meets no bitterness,' he continues, 'in conversation with the Divine Wisdom, nor weariness in His company; on the contrary one finds consolation and joy.'

As to the recitation of the Divine Office, he attached so much importance to it that he wrote a book on the best manner of acquitting oneself of this

duty. 'We recite our office exteriorly, with decorum,' he would say, 'but let us say it with the attention and devotion which is suited to it.' Never did he recite his office without giving some time to call back wandering thoughts and place himself in the presence of God. To prevent routine, he employed and taught his children different methods and intentions. He required the greatest exactitude in the exterior ceremonies. 'They are,' he was wont to say, 'the images of our faith, the incentive of our piety, the sign of our religion; besides, the priest ought to be as a statue in a niche, dead to all that is not God, and have life, sentiments, and attention only for Him.' He recommended the breviary to be recited gravely, without precipitation or anticipation, often saying to his confrères: 'I beg of you, particularly, that in the exercises which directly regard God, as the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the Divine Office, morning and night prayers, the "Benedicite" or the Grace, you should never go through them hurriedly under any pretext whatsoever, but gravely, distinctly, and devotionally.' He was annoyed with those who would hurry the recitation of the Divine Office. 'To hear them chant,' he would say, 'one would believe they were engaged to condemn God, to mock Him, and make Him dishonoured by the others.' Once, on a journey he entered, according to his custom, a church where the Office of the Dead was being recited in a rather quick and not too reverent a manner. A priest

intoned the beautiful canticle of Ezechias: *Ego dixi in dimidio*, etc. . . . 'I said: In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of hell.'—Isaiah xxxviii. 10; and P. Eudes let these words escape him loud enough to be heard: 'If you continue like that you shall go pretty quick.'

All his life he was filled with respect for the Divine Office; and notwithstanding, the responsibility of the breviary disturbed him when he was at an advanced age. 'I have my breviary to say,' he would repeat, 'what an account to render!'

Attaching such great importance to the breviary, he attached still more to the holy sacrifice of the Mass. His historians tell us that he celebrated his first Mass on Christmas night with such fervour and devotion that he seemed as one transported into Heaven, and one would have taken him for a seraph. One of his writings found after his death, and beginning with these words: 'O abyss of love! O infinite goodness! Why am I not all love for Thee? O loved, O loving, O lovely Jesus, . . .' proves to us that he unceasingly celebrated this great act with the same ardour and piety. 'Three eternities,' he would say, 'would be necessary to celebrate worthily one single Mass: the first to prepare, the second to say It, and the third to render worthy thanksgiving.' One of his historians adds: 'He offered the Adorable Victim every day with such lively joy, such respectful devotion, such ardent love for Jesus Christ, that

his countenance appeared transformed. His holiness was shown by his exterior, the tone of his voice, his gravity in performing the ceremonies, his rare modesty, the abundant tears which he shed. Those who saw him at the altar were penetrated with devotion.'

He also exacted from others the same respect for the holy mysteries. Having remarked one day that one of his children had said Mass in a quarter of an hour, he was indignant and declared before the whole community that he would not be a witness of such indevotion, and that if the culprit did not correct his fault he would himself leave the Congregation.

His zeal for the service of his Divine Master hesitated at nothing, and was undaunted even in the presence of kings. One day P. Eudes celebrated Mass at Versailles, in presence of Louis XIV. and his court. The king was piously kneeling, while his courtiers remained standing and talked without reserve. At the Offertory P. Eudes turned round and congratulated Louis XIV. on the good example he gave to all, and then he added: 'What astonishes me is, while your Majesty acquits himself so perfectly of his duties towards God and humbly renders Him profound homage, to see numbers of your officers and subjects doing the contrary.' Immediately they were struck with astonishment, and all knelt down, rather through fear of their master than through respect for the Divine Majesty. It

was daily reading and meditation on the word of God which inspired P. Eudes with such great respect for holy things, and gave him that spirit of faith which animated all his actions. He always read the Scripture kneeling and with head uncovered. When reading it he seemed to hear our Lord Himself, and to hear His own sacred words. He penetrated and nourished his soul with the pure text without any commentaries. Every morning he committed to memory some of the verses of the Holy Scripture, which were his food for the rest of the day, engraving them in his mind and still more in his heart. All his writings, and principally the Rules given to the Congregation, reveal a profound knowledge enlarged with the Holy Scripture, particularly with the Epistles of St. Paul and the Book of Proverbs.

RELATIONS WITH THE NEIGHBOUR

The priest is the mediator between God and men ; he is not a priest for himself alone ; ‘ he is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God.’—Heb. v. 1, according to the expression of St. Paul. Nevertheless, if we observe those whom God has invested with this dignity, we see that the fruits of their ministry are far from being the same, and that it depends much less on their talents than on their virtues. Science, industry, thrive in commerce, in politics, in the arts, but they do not sink into the hearts of the people, they do not regenerate parishes.

A learned priest may convince the heretic and the libertine, but he may not convert them. And why? Because it belongs to God alone to change the hearts of men and to sanctify souls; the priest should be but an instrument in God's Hands. And it is only through saints that God has been pleased to accomplish His greatest works, and the oftenest by those who seem, like M. Vianney, deprived of natural means.

If P. Eudes was not gifted in human science he had a profound knowledge of divine science; he was well versed in the Sacred Scriptures, and at the same time he excelled in humility, in love of God, in eminent sanctity. Such is the secret of his influence over souls in the confessional, in public, in preaching, or in governing his institutions.

Governed by a double sentiment, the hatred of sin and the desire of saving souls, and convinced that the priest nowhere exercises so much power as in the tribunal of penance, he was most assiduous in this duty. 'Preachers,' he would say, 'beat the bushes, but confessors catch the birds; the first make a rough sketch of the work, the second finish it and bring it to perfection: preachers bring before sinners the greatness and enormity of their crimes, but the confessors stretch forth their hand to rescue them; they are the skilful physicians who apply the remedy to the wounds in order to perfect the cure.' 'In the sacred tribunal,' he continues, 'the priest binds and loosens, absolves and condemns, not as

earthly judges whose passing and temporal power extends only to the body, and whose judgments are written only on paper which the wind might blow away; but as the judge of Heaven who has power over souls and whose decrees are written with the blood of God in the book of eternal justice.'

Like a charitable physician he listened patiently to the recital of the disease without showing ennui or fatigue, and he applied the remedy with sweetness and delicacy. For some time he was confessor to the Benedictines of Montmartre. One of them, M. Catherine Marin, writes: 'For many years we have had the happiness of assisting at P. Eudes' conferences, which were very touching; he was like a lion in the pulpit but a lamb in the confessional.' As a judge he knew how to use firmness and exact reparation for wrongs done to one's neighbour. A high-born lady, who took possession of the field of her neighbour, came one day to him. P. Eudes began by reclaiming from her the respect due to the property of others; but seeing he could not persuade her he begged her to go and find another confessor. 'To be too ready in giving absolution,' he would say, 'is to strengthen sin in souls; to annihilate the designs of the Divine Mercy in the institution of this sacrament, and give licence to sinners insolently to abandon themselves to every crime.'

To firmness and zeal P. Eudes united disinterestedness. Never did he accept anything in the

confessional, even to give it to the poor, much less to use it for himself. With this motive he forbade his confrères to witness the last will of the dying. He was accessible to all, but he showed a preference for the poor and infirm. One of his Fathers refusing one day to hear a person because he was going to say Mass, P. Eudes took him aside and said to him : 'What are you doing, my dear Brother? Perhaps this soul is in the hands of the demon, and, being dead, asks from you the life of grace. Go immediately, and you can think afterwards about your Mass.' 'I did so,' says the Father, 'and experienced the worth of obedience; for this soul had the happiness of bringing forth worthy fruits of penance, and of showing by his works the sincerity of his conversion.'

Never did P. Eudes enter the confessional without a moment's meditation, or without having prayed, not wishing to resemble according to his expression, 'the brush, which becomes dirty by cleaning the house.' It is in one of his books, the *Bon Confesseur*, the fruit of his experience and holy labours, we may learn the goodness, the sweetness, the firmness which he knew how to blend together, and by which he exercised so salutary an influence over souls.

We have already spoken of the preachings of V. P. Eudes; we will only add a few lines to complete the portrait. We are told he was of a medium height and well proportioned, his bearing noble and

majestic, his air dignified and venerable, his action natural, his voice sonorous, his features expressed sweetness and affability, and in his eyes, which reflected his beautiful soul, shone forth a light full of fervour and brightness which captivated his audience. If he spoke of the beauty and of the worth of virtue, of chastity for example, the serenity and modesty which renders this virtue lovable shone in his countenance. His tone, his action, his looks penetrated the commonest truths, and touched the hardest hearts.

But notwithstanding his talent for his preaching and his experience, he never went up into the pulpit without preparing himself by prayer and meditation. At the beginning of the seventeenth century sacred eloquence, as we have said, was to be created, if we may so speak; sermons were only an inherent collection of divine and human learning, and often only a tissue of puerile play of words. The people had great need of religious instruction; ignorance and corruption reigned everywhere, and particularly in Lower Normandy. An historian relates that about the year 1620 not more than fifty persons communicated once a year in the town of Argentan, and that the Paschal communion was neither numerous nor edifying.

P. Eudes, who shuddered at this indifference, suffered still more to see the evangelical truths so badly promulgated. 'The majority of preachers,' he said indignantly, 'instead of seeking the tears

and sighs of those who listen to them, according to the advice of St. Jerome, speak only of things agreeable and calculated to satisfy the curiosity of minds; their sermons are polished and full of artifice, more calculated to flatter the ear than to touch hearts.' 'To preach in that way,' he continues, 'is to profane the Divine Word; it is to annihilate the fruits of the Cross and Passion of our Saviour, it is homicide to souls.' He absolutely forbade his brethren to act thus: 'No, no, Jesus and Mary will not regard as the children of their Congregation those preachers who follow the rules that the ambition of their mind, the prudence of the flesh, the wisdom of the age, and the desire of pleasing the world suggest to them.' All, then, consisted for our zealous missionary in deep meditation of the subject, in a good methodical plan, without pre-occupation about his words, nor of the policy of the style. But his arguments were so strongly supported and nourished by the Sacred Scripture and the text of the Fathers, his spirit of faith was so manifest that his words carried with them conviction to the mind, and touched the most rebellious hearts. Imitating the great apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier, he carried with him on his missions a small bell to assemble the villagers. Going into the markets he collected them by this means; then standing at the foot of a cross, or on some eminence, he announced to them the truths of salvation. This apostolic zeal of

P. Eudes gained him such public veneration, that towards the end of his life he could scarcely reach the pulpit, and during the Lenten sermons, which he preached at Saint-Pierre, at Caen, places were engaged from five o'clock in the morning for the sermon at nine o'clock. We have already mentioned that the churches were often insufficient to accommodate the crowd. But there was something still more astonishing than all this concourse: it was the ascendancy P. Eudes gained over his thousands of hearers. Many a time, as if by an electric shock, they were seen to tremble and fall down on their knees together. One day he preached on sin and its punishment: he depicted in so vivid a manner the sufferings of hell and the wrath of an avenging God, that his frightened audience threw themselves on their knees, crying out with him: 'Mercy, my God, mercy!' This sermon which made such a profound impression gave rise to an amusing coincidence. Mgr. Camus, formerly Bishop of Belley, and friend of St. Francis de Sales, who had retired into solitude in a house of the Oratory at Caen, had heard of the emotion caused by P. Eudes. This distinguished orator, to whom St. Francis de Sales wrote one day concerning eloquence: 'you have more fire at the tip of your finger than I have in all my body,' wished to test his strength with our missionary. He then composed a sermon on fear of the judgments of God, and hoped to make his audience also cry out, 'Mercy.' Mounting the

pulpit of Saint-Pierre at Caen, this prelate sought to touch their hearts and awaken them; then coming to the part he believed the most touching, he cried out: 'Mercy, O my God, mercy.' Only the walls of the church responded; no one appeared to be moved. He animated himself the more, he urged, solicited his hearers not to remain insensible but to repeat with him: 'Mercy!' This second effort met with no more success than the first, all present lowered their heads, and the preacher, realising his inability to touch their hearts, hastened to close his discourse. In spite of this humiliation, Mgr. Camus did not render less justice to P. Eudes. He once said after having heard one of his sermons: 'Certainly, I have met with many preachers, I have even heard the best in Italy as well as in France, and I must confess I never met with one who penetrated the hearts of men more than that good father.'

In the year 1661, the holy missionary preached on the 8th February, feast of the Heart of Mary, in the church of the Religious of the Blessed Sacrament. The Queen-mother was informed of it, and wished to repair thither, but the sermon was nearly finished when she arrived. When he perceived her, P. Eudes immediately left off his subject, and alluding to the fire which two days before had destroyed a part of the Louvre, he declared that nothing could happen except by the permission of God, and that misfortunes are the chastisement of

sin. This burning of the Louvre, was it not the punishment of the Sundays and the feasts profaned for its erection? Have not the kings urged their subjects to embellish it? Ought they not to provide for the spiritual interests of their people, by arresting the diffusion of erroneous doctrines? Lastly, P. Eudes concluded by these words: 'I beg of Your Majesty to receive these warnings not as coming from man, but as coming from God Himself. I am but a miserable sinner, but in my calling and as holding the place of God, I can say with St. Paul, that I here act as the ambassador of Jesus Christ, to carry the word of the King of kings to a great queen, and I pray you to accept it in this manner.' The Queen, far from being offended, said when leaving: 'It is a long time since I have heard any preaching, but now I have just heard some. That is how they ought to preach, and not give out soothing sentences as the others have done.' To this honourable testimony of P. Eudes, how many more might we not add! We hear M. Olier, curé of Saint-Sulpice, call him the 'wonder of his age.' Bossuet declares: 'it is thus we ought all to preach.' M. Le Pileur, Vicar of Coutances, in the absence of the Bishop, gives him in writing a recommendation in these terms: 'His discourses fall like soft rain which is ardently longed for, and sinks into the heart as the rain penetrates the earth; and, wonderful to relate, his word is heard at the same time by more than forty thousand persons, without

their losing a single word ; his voice sinks into the very depths of the heart ; no heart so hard that he cannot soften.'

It is true to say that P. Eudes was consumed for the glory of God, and that without considering his strength, he followed the outpourings of his zeal. We see this by a letter of Mgr. Cospéan, Bishop of Lisieux. 'Thank God,' he wrote in 1640, 'that I was permitted to be present at your sermons, the remembrance of which gives me untold joy ; there is only one thing that hinders me from enjoying it perfectly : it is that you do not sufficiently mind your health, which is dearer to me than my own life. You exhaust yourself by immoderate labour.' It was, in fact, the only reproach that could be addressed to P. Eudes, whose indefatigable zeal knew no repose, and it is the only one that could be formed against him by the celebrated Mgr. Huet, Bishop of Avranches.

In 1674, the Archbishop of Paris, and the Bishops of Lisieux, Evreux, Coutances, and Rennes, wrote to Pope Clement that they had confided the direction of the seminaries and missions of their dioceses to P. Eudes, a man remarkable for the purity of his morals, his piety, his modesty, his doctrine, and his respect for the Holy See. 'For more than fifty years,' write these prelates, 'he has laboured in the vineyard of the Lord with ardent zeal and abundant blessings, as is shown by the fruits produced by his missions, when sometimes more than

forty confessors were needed to satisfy the devotion of the faithful.'

We have seen that to second him in the work of missions, to continue this ministry after him, and to direct the large seminaries, he had established a Congregation. It still remains for us to see how he governed it. The rules he gave to each of his Superiors in his Constitutions are the principles on which his own conduct was based. 'He shall regard,' he says, 'his office as superior, not as an honour and a dignity, but as a charge and a cross, and as a subject of fear and lowliness.'

He considered himself as the servant of all those he guided. He signed the letters which he addressed to them: 'Tout votre, Jean Eudes, missionnaire,' or 'Plus votre que mien, Jean Eudes.' He never wished the title of Superior-general to be given to him, either in speaking or in public acts. He continues: 'The Superior shall remember that he ought to govern more by charity than by authority, by prayer more than by commanding, by example more than by words, by sweetness more than by rigour, by a spirit of gentleness more than by a spirit of domination or of ruling.' Such was always his own conduct. One of his fathers speaks of him thus: 'In all circumstances he was most careful to forestall the wants of his brethren, always so managed not to shock their natural inclinations, that it surprised and edified at the same time. Once he had need of a subject from Rouen, and wrote to

the Superior: 'I do not ask for M. Vaguel by authority, or as Superior, but as a brother who begs you to give him to us for a short time; or rather to give him to our Lord and His Blessed Mother. I hope you will not refuse them.' A Superior not sending him a priest he had asked for, he wrote to him thus: 'You persist in your disobedience. I have complained to our Lord and His Blessed Mother, and have great confidence that They will provide and not allow you thus to overthrow Their Congregation. It is charity alone that obliges me to write to you these things. I beseech you, my very dear brother, by the Sacred Heart of our Lord and His Blessed Mother, profit by them, and receive them in the spirit of humility, submission, and charity.' It is thus he tried to govern, to conduct, and to guide all his subjects, by charity, sweetness, and condescension.

P. Eudes adds in his constitutions: 'The Superior ought, nevertheless, to know how to mingle severity with sweetness, when there is occasion for it; and he is obliged to preserve the respect which belongs to his authority through reverence for Him whom he represents.'

When he removed M. Manchon from the seminary of Lisieux to send him to Rouen, some of the fathers were dissatisfied, and threatened to leave the Congregation rather than obey a new Superior. The holy Founder was deeply grieved, and wrote to the two or three culprits a long letter in which we

read : ‘ If I had sent you the last of our Brethren to govern you, it is your duty to submit ; because our Lord submitted for love of you to Herod, Pilate, to His executioners, and even to the powers of darkness. I have sent you a man who is one of the seniors of the Congregation, [very wise, virtuous, charitable, and you condemn him. Where is humility, abnegation of self, of one’s own judgment, of self-will ? Where is the fruit of so many meditations, so much spiritual reading ? Open your eyes, my very dear Brethren, and see the faults you are committing.’

Humility, sweetness, and firmness, such were the virtues he practised in the governing of his Congregation. Let us not then be astonished if in his *Histoire des Ordres Religieux*, Hélyot has been able to say : ‘ P. Eudes, who was gifted with every Christian and ecclesiastical virtue, devoted his principal care in forming the priests of his Society ; to this end he employed all those means his zeal could suggest ; he succeeded so well, that they were filled with his spirit and inherited his virtues.’

CHAPTER X

CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY FROM 1680

TO THE REVOLUTION

THE works of God never die. We have seen that P. Eudes had elected as his successor, M. Blouet de Camilly. Born at Caen of a noble family, M. Blouet, whose appearance was very distinguished, was in his early years thrown into the world and imbued with its prejudices; he seemed destined for a military career, and loved sport and pleasure. His sister, who was of a more serious turn, had without the knowledge of her brother, entered the Convent of the Visitation. M. Blouet went there with one of his brothers, threatened the Superior, broke down a part of the grating, and took away his unwilling sister. Out of evil our merciful God draws good. He was attracted by the advice and example of his young sister, after a time he would pray and recite with her the office of the Blessed Virgin, then he allowed her to return to the convent, and finally he himself, coming to P. Eudes, asked to be admitted into his Congregation. He was then 23 years of age. Sent to Paris for his theological studies, he was afterwards

employed on the missions, then at the prefecture of the seminary of Caen, afterwards he was sent to Coutances in 1671 to build up the seminary. The work was nearly finished when a fire destroyed a great part of the building. He, however, reconstructed it out of his own means. Such a man seemed destined to succeed P. Eudes. As soon as he was invested with this charge, he undertook to finish the Church of the seminary of Caen. The news had spread about that it would never be finished, and already the Jesuit Fathers had it in view to purchase it. But P. Blouet hastened the work, and it was blessed on the 23rd November 1687. Some time after the first stone of the seminary was laid, and this fine building, the ornament of the town, was finally completed in 1703. P. Blouet then went to reside at Coutances, published the works of P. Eudes, continued the work of missions, in 1688 accepted the direction of the pilgrimage of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Bosserie, near Fougères, which was resorted to by the Bretons, the Manceaux, and the Normans, but was abandoned in 1719. He received from Mgr. Huet, in 1691, the direction of the seminary of Avranches, which was finished two years later; he accepted, in 1701, that of the seminary of Dol, and finally the seminary of Senlis in place of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament. Always active, at this time he purchased a house called, 'Les Tourettes,' in the Rue des Postes, at Paris, thus carrying out a fondly desired project of

P. Eudes, namely, a foundation in the capital. He also convened four general assemblies, and during the last named his successor. After many labours, he died in 1711; for fifty-six years he was a member of the Congregation which he governed for thirty-one years.

P. Guy de Fontaines, who entered the Society in 1691, was elected by nineteen votes out of twenty-four; he was vicar and canon of Bayeux. This dignity, which he had received with the consent of P. Blouet, did not hinder him from remaining strongly attached to the institute of P. Eudes. As Superior-general he continued to reside at Bayeux, and ardently fulfilled the duties of his charge; for twelve years he studied the constitutions, in order to reduce them to twenty-seven fundamental articles which might receive the royal approbation. With this intention he often assembled the seniors of the Congregation to ask advice. His project succeeded, and the king issued letters patent in the most praiseworthy terms. At the same time P. de Fontaines revised the Annals of the Congregation. He was also engaged with the missions, and he would often say: 'The Congregation began by missions, it must continue them, and it will retain its fervour only by remaining faithful to missionary labours.' During the latter years of his life, after the example of P. Eudes, he was obliged to arm himself with patience in order to support the many vexations raised by

Mgr. de Lorraine, a Jansenist, who was Bishop of Bayeux since 1720. This was a time when the best minds, the most fervent congregations, the most promising prelates were drawn away by new ideas, and refused to submit to the bull 'Unigenitus,'¹ when the deacon Pâris gave himself up to austere eccentricities and gained so many proselytes. P. de Fontaines was particularly careful to maintain peace among his brethren, to warn them against novelties and to recommend them an entire submission to Roman decisions. He had the happiness of being listened to except by two or three high-minded persons who preferred to leave the Institute. It is much to be regretted that in all religious societies these measures were not taken, and that so many were tainted by not having sacrificed some few of their members.

The Eudists, in 1727, took possession of the small seminary of Domfront. A short time after, P. de Fontaines died at the age of sixty-four years, forty of which he devoted to the Congregation, being superior-general seventeen years.

P. Cousin, his successor, was superior of the seminary of Coutances, after having laboured for twenty-five years in the one at Rouen. In this last city he showed great firmness in the face of the archbishop, Mgr. de Bezons, a prelate too weak in regard to the Jansenists. Raised to the generalate,

¹ This bull contained 101 propositions extracted from the book of an Oratorian, P. Quesnal.

he employed the same energy in using his influence over his subjects to carry out the constitutions, to which he himself was the first to submit. He believed it also his duty to maintain and strengthen the bonds of fraternal charity between the houses of the Institute, which he went on horseback to visit, notwithstanding the distance, accompanied by a lay brother. He stayed at Paris in the house 'Les Tourettes,' which was bought in 1703, and was not yet furnished with the most indispensable articles. This sojourn in the capital city, was it not the best means of facilitating relations with numerous other communities, and of making known a Congregation ignored everywhere, except in Normandy and a small part of Brittany? With him lived some students who had come to Paris to continue their course of theology.

Soon P. Cousin was known by many orthodox prelates, whose esteem he acquired. But the alarmed Jansenists published against him and the Eudists innumerable defamatory articles. These sectarians were unscrupulous in regard to charity. The Congregation developed, nevertheless, and under the government of P. Cousin, undertook the direction of the large seminaries of Séez and Blois in 1774.

Soon the venerable old man felt his strength diminishing; in 1749 he called P. de Saint-Germain to replace him while he retired to Caen, where he died in 1751, at the age of ninety-six years.

P. Auvray de Saint-André was chosen to succeed him; and from Rouen, where he was superior, he came to Caen as it was a more central house. The Annals of the Congregation tell us that he was of a rare piety, singularly attached to the practice of all the rules, and that, by his goodness, sweetness, and simplicity, he gained all hearts. The Eudists were called upon in 1764 to direct the small seminary of Lisieux. About this time one of them, P. Beurier, by his zeal and talents made war against Jansenism. He was considered one of the great preachers of the eighteenth century. Two volumes of his sermons, a volume of his lectures, and a manuscript life of P. Eudes are still extant. In 1769, P. Auvray becoming infirm, and feeling his end approaching, asked for a successor, and was replaced by P. Michel Lefèvre.

P. Lefèvre, superior of the seminary of Rouen, had filled the same office at Rennes, and afterwards at Paris, where he was also chaplain to the Sainte-Chapelle du Palais. In all his positions, both priests and laity agreed in praising his extraordinary amenity. He distinguished himself equally well by his prudence and his discerning of spirits which made him perceive and surmount obstacles. His humility was shown particularly on one occasion. He had published a small treatise on the extent of commercé. It was remarked to him that he was too broad in his doctrine and did not support the ordinary teaching. He immediately destroyed his

work, protesting that he renounced it entirely. His health became undermined in 1775, but he, nevertheless, continued the visits of his houses, and finally died at Rennes.

Scarcely had P. Lecoq, his successor, entered upon his duties, when he was struck with paralysis, and died in 1777. He has left many works on civil and canon law; the most esteemed is entitled *De l'état des personnes et des biens*.

P. Pierre Dumont, superior of the seminary of Coutances, who was loved by all his confrères, was elected his successor. From Caen, where he fixed his residence, he regularly visited the houses of the Congregation. But he also, in 1782, was attacked by paralysis, and M. Hébert, superior of the house of Paris, was appointed his coadjutor, with future succession. He lingered, however, until 1796.

P. Hébert, it is said, became confessor to the unfortunate Louis XVI., when his ordinary director, the curé of Saint-Eustache, had taken the schismatical oath. He won the esteem and confidence of this unhappy monarch, who wrote to him thus: 'I expect nothing more from men; bring me heavenly consolations. P. Hébert passed with him the nights of the 9th and 10th of August 1792. On the 10th he withdrew to the Hôtel de Provence: he was there arrested and conducted to the church of the Carmes, which was transformed into a prison.

About the end of August P. Hébert had the pain

of seeing arrive the ecclesiastics, who lived in his house. They were twenty-two in number, and twenty of them were imprisoned at the Carmes and two at Saint-Firmin. The latter were P. Le Franc, superior of the seminary of Coutances, and P. Pottier. If we still except P. Bérand du Péron, formerly professor at Seéz, the majority were not Eudists, but simply boarders from the house 'Les Tourettes.' We know all these ecclesiastics had to suffer in the church of the Carmes. The first night they were forbidden to speak to each other; a keeper was placed over each one; their only food was bread and water, and, until the fifth day, their only bed was the floor of the church. A holy man obtained permission to visit P. Hébert every second day. 'On Sunday, the 2nd September,' he writes, 'the fear of disturbing him hindered me from speaking to him. I saw him, and contented myself with admiring him. He was kneeling in the sanctuary, his face turned towards the altar, his hands crossed on his breast; he seemed as if offering the sacrifice of his life to God. It was about three o'clock, and at five o'clock he was no more.' According to M. Tresvaux,¹ he was struck down one of the first, at an oratory in the garden, and fell on the step of the altar before a statue of the Blessed Virgin; he was pierced fourteen times by the sword. We read in the will of P. Hébert: 'If I die a natural death, I

¹ *Vie du Père Jean Eudes*, by a Jesuit, P. de Montigny. Revised and published in 1827 by l'abbé Tresvaux.

would wish to be interred in the cemetery of the parish where I died. If, what may easily happen, I suffer death, I pardon with all my heart those who take away my life. If it is for refusing to take the civil oath, I shall be grateful to those who will be the occasion of procuring for me so glorious a death. I beg M. de Gournay, the executor of my will, to give my watch to the one who will give me my death-stroke, if he can find him out.'

At Saint-Firmin P. Le Franc and P. Pottier also suffered death.

P. Le Franc said to his students before leaving them that a good priest ought rather to die than show the least sign of cowardice; and during these troublous times he did not fear to publish many works: *Le voile levé* and *Conjuration contre la religion catholique et les souverains*.

P. Pottier, on the contrary, gave great scandal by not remaining steadfast as his confrères did. The 16th January 1791 he mounted the pulpit in the metropolitan church of Rouen, and in presence of the general council of the commune and the assembled people, delivered a discourse in favour of the civil constitution, to which he gave his solemn oath. The news soon spread throughout the diocese and greatly concerned the priests who remained faithful to the Catholic religion. All the Eudists were destroyed. But God did not permit this illusion to be of long duration. The next day when the clock of the seminary gave the signal for the first

exercise of the day, P. Pottier went down to the church to pray. He found himself alone. Surprised, he knocked at the doors, and even went to the bed of one of the students and asked why he did not rise to go to prayer. 'Sir,' answered the student, 'we do not recognise you as our superior since you have abandoned the Catholic Church; we can no longer pray with you.' The same answer having been given to him by many others, he realised how severe and well deserved was the lesson given to him by those who were always so docile and respectful to him.

He left to go to his family at Havre, and it is related that when his mother saw him, she cried out: 'Go away, I will not receive an apostate.' 'Well, mother,' he answered, 'I will be one no longer.' He immediately returned to Rouen, and stayed in a particular house in order to retract his oath, which he printed, made as public as possible, and sent to the municipal authorities. All was already done when P. Hébert arrived to lead back to the fold the wandering sheep. This worthy superior had the happiness of witnessing the repentance and tears of P. Pottier, whom he conducted to Paris, where this poor Father endeavoured by his writings and his preaching to forewarn the faithful against schism. Arrested on the 26th of August 1792, and confined at Saint-Firmin, he was struck down on the 2nd September and thrown out of a window into a street, where bandits finished off the victims.

The process of the beatification of all these priests who were massacred on the 2nd and 3rd of September has been taken up, to the great satisfaction of catholics.

The Congregation of Jesus and Mary, which, at the time of the Revolution numbered seventeen houses, disappeared like so many others, and saw its members dispersed, seeking refuge among strangers or hiding themselves with devoted friends rather than betray their duty. It is the testimony so eloquently delivered in 1874 by Mgr. Besson, who died bishop of Nîmes: 'Behold the hour,' he said, 'when we must choose between the law of God and the law of man; the constitutional oath which has seduced so many souls only hoped to claim one victim in such a numerous congregation. I call him a victim rather than a culprit, for two days after having taken the fatal oath, P. Pottier repented and retracted it. Happy recantation which won for him the palm of martyrdom! Many Eudists, with their superior general, P. Hébert, bore off this glorious palm with him. Flow, blood of martyrs! this blood is a seed which in another century will bear fruit. No, a congregation thus steeped in the blood of fidelity and honour cannot perish, and the influence and power of P. Eudes shall shine forth again in the re-establishing of his work.'

PART II

CHAPTER I

THE CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

AT the end of the eighteenth century nothing but ruins were to be met with. The torrent of the Revolution had carried all away, and religious institutions particularly had disappeared; their members had met with death or had been exiled.

As soon as the storm had passed over, many religious societies hurried to gather the remnants of the wreck. The Eudists unhappily were not of this number; their Institute had been so tried, and its members so dispersed, that it seemed to be forever swallowed up. However, in 1826, a Eudist, P. Blanchard, endeavoured to save it. But, it was a little late; the majority of the former members of Congregation had left this world; the few survivors were of an advanced age, engaged in positions which it would be impossible for them to relinquish, and also out of condition to take up again the direction

of seminaries or colleges.¹ Nevertheless, P. Blanchard, a man of great faith and ardent zeal, could not be resigned to the disappearance of a society he had known to be so prosperous and so useful to the Church.

P. Blanchard, who was born in 1755, at Carentilly, in the diocese of Coutances, was prefect and superior of the small seminary of Rennes. During the Revolution he took refuge in Spain, returned to France in 1797, and lay concealed at Rennes until 1802. As soon as he believed the moment favourable, he assembled young men, particularly those who he hoped would become priests, of whom the Church stood in such great need. For this end he made use of the garrets of the hotel of Talhouët, afterwards of the ancient convent 'des Cordeliers,' where he established a small and a large seminary. But he had to give it up in 1811, as he would not consent to teach nothing but those doctrines approved of by the government. Honoured with the title of

¹ P. Fleury, formerly missionary de la Garlière, then seventy years of age, was curé of Coudeville; P. Beuchère, of the seminary of Rouen, though seventy-eight years of age, passed entire days in the confessional at Rennes; P. Noël Guérard, ex-superior de la Garlière, was sixty-eight; P. Bosvy, formerly director of the seminary of Caen, was vicar-general of Coutances, and notwithstanding his being sixty-four years of age, directed the conferences of the diocese; P. David, seventy years of age, former director of the seminary of Dol, was then curé of Règueville; P. Beaumont, of the seminary of Rennes, aged sixty-seven years, was vicar-general of Bayeux; P. Hébert, formerly director of the seminary of Rennes, aged sixty-five years, was curé of

Vicar-General in 1813, named Rector of the Academy of Rennes in 1815, decorated with the Legion of Honour in 1820, on account of the success of his pupils in the competitions, at the same time he established a small seminary on his property of Pont-Saint-Martin, under the direction of a pious layman, M. Louis, Professor of the University.

M. Louis, coming morning and evening for his course at the Lyceum, brought with him the scholars of the classes of humanity. This was exacted by the royal statutes. P. Blanchard, in the midst of these honours and charges, always entertained a secret desire for the revival of the Society of the Eudists. In 1825, with this intention he assembled a number of ecclesiastics, the majority of whom had been his pupils. They could not agree about the Constitutions revised by P. Eudes: some thought them good, and others judged them out of date considering the exigencies of the time. Another meeting of the Eudists on the 9th January 1826

Saint-Gilles of Caen; P. Langevin, former prefect of the seminary of Caen, was seventy-four, and had become infirm. This was the case with many other Eudists who were desirous of the revival of their Congregation, but incapable of carrying out their longing wish. We may mention P. Villeroy, who was born in 1749, ex-prefect of the seminaries of Dol and Séez, and who concealed himself in the latter town during the Revolution. In 1804, with the assistance of a pious girl, Mlle. Thérèse Raguenel, he there established the Congregation of the Holy Trinity, submitted to a rigorous enclosure, destined to honour the mysteries of the Incarnate Word, and to reproduce the virtues of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

resulted in greater success. The Congregation was officially re-established with its former Constitutions, and accepted as one of its members, M. Louis, who had received Holy Orders. P. Blanchard received the title of Superior-General, but it must be confessed he was a chief without an army; all the ancient Fathers kept their positions and continued their usual habits of life.

Notwithstanding, P. Eudes, Professor of rhetoric at the Royal College, continued to direct the pupils of the senior classes. Four times a day he had a walk of half-an-hour, which he believed was a loss of time and also prejudicial to the studies. For more convenience he bought out of his own means, in 1828, an ancient convent of the Capuchins, situated in the old and narrow Rue d'Antrain, one of those which the terrible fire of 1720 had spared. He came to live there in 1829 with the division of senior pupils, while the junior remained at Pont-Saint-Martin with P. Blanchard. In 1830 P. Louis on account of refusing to take the oath was deprived of his chair of rhetoric, and P. Blanchard was replaced as rector of the Academy. The death of P. Blanchard followed soon after; he departed on the 14th September of the same year.

The times were so unsettled it was scarcely possible to reunite the former Eudists, who had besides no active part in the labours of their junior confrères. In reality the Congregation consisted only of six members whom P. Louis and

P. Guérard incorporated in 1826, and the four others in 1830 only. P. Louis, universal legatee of P. Blanchard and Superior of the Capuchins, found himself by force of circumstances Superior-General, and his authority was never contested. P. Louis, then forty years of age, was animated only by supernatural motives, and this was the secret of his courage amidst the innumerable trials which filled his life. He also found support and advice in a Sulpician Father, M. Mollevaut, Superior of the 'Solitude d'Issy,' where P. Louis made his preparation for the priesthood.

One of the first acts of the new Superior was to collect the works of P. Eudes, for he had no desire to build on strange foundations. 'Nothing better can be done,' M. Mollevaut wrote to him, 'than to go back to the first institution of a Congregation, to revive the primitive spirit, to inspire profound respect for the holy traditions.' This wise advice coming from a son of M. Olier cannot surprise us. P. Louis respectfully conformed to it, and was careful not to alter the work of P. Eudes.

M. Mollevaut again wrote to him in 1837 in the same strain on the formation of the novices. 'Put in the first place the books of your holy Founder. If an order takes up other spiritual books than those of its founder, the primitive cannot be imparted to the young nor preserved in the old. Would any other way procure you a reunion of holy priests: a body, particularly a body of Eudists? No, and it is

nevertheless your object, the end which you wish to obtain.' This advice was given to P. Louis because he had just bought near the Capuchins, where there were now both masters and pupils, a house called 'La Petite Cocarderie,' and had installed the Saint-Gabriel novitiate. For this end he brought from the seminary of Saint-Sulpice seven students who had finished their theological studies, and some others who began them at the seminary of Issy. One of them, M. Libermann, a Jewish convert, surnamed 'le petit ange' on account of his truly interior spirit, his sweetness, simplicity, and equable temper, was named master of novices. His health had been the only drawback, being subject to frequent attacks of epilepsy, which up to that time had prevented him from receiving Holy Orders. His virtue compensated for his youth, and the happy exercise which he influenced in the seminary of Issy was a pledge of success in the direction of the novitiate. The following year a seminarist of Saint-Sulpice came to see him at Rennes, and made known to him the project he and many of his friends entertained, viz., that of evangelising the negroes of the French colonies. M. Libermann approved of this mission, and P. Louis, who was consulted, promised to open the novitiate to the zealous missionaries who had a longing desire for this work. But when they had studied the constitutions of P. Eudes, they were convinced that this work was not in conformity with their vocation. Then M. Libermann

with the assent of his directors revised a plan of constitutions more appropriate to the negro apostolate, and left for Rome about the end of November 1839. In a letter which he left for P. Louis, we read: 'I have consulted my God, and His servants who are the most zealous for His glory, and all have unanimously decided that I ought to leave this poor Congregation, which is, and always will be, most dear to me.' He kept his word even when he had become Superior-General of the Society of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which later on was amalgamated with that of the Holy Ghost.

At that time P. Louis had much to endure on account of two foundations made in America, the first in 1831, made by a young Eudist, M. Bertin, at Port-au-Prince in the island of Trinidad; the second in 1836, at Vincennes, in Indiana, at the request of Mgr. Bruté, a former pupil of P. Blanchard. The latter, principally, whose aim was the foundation of a seminary college, met with trials of every kind particularly from the unreasonable exigencies of Mgr. de la Hailandière, successor of Mgr. Bruté.

P. Louis also experienced many vexations on the part of Mgr. de Lesquen, bishop of Rennes, on account of the ideas of M. Félicité de Lamennais in the paper *L'Avenir*, and in the *Essai sur l'indifférence*. P. Louis had sent to Rome a long account which determined or hastened the condemnation of these doctrines by Gregory XVI. Mgr.

de Lesquen at first did not perceive the extent of the danger, nor the enthusiasm which was beginning to lead young priests astray; he therefore showed his dissatisfaction at the conduct of P. Louis, who, however, did not lose his favour. He even proposed some time after to unite to the Congregation of the Eudists his society of diocesan missionaries confided to the care of M. Jean de Lamennais since the condemnation of his brother. In 1838 the request was again renewed. But P. Louis in agreement with his council always refused, fearing the remains of the leaven of 'mennésianisme,' and not wishing to modify any essential article in the constitutions of P. Eudes. Mgr. de Lesquen, who was annoyed, then said to P. Louis: 'For the future you will only be tolerated in the diocese.' But the prelate died, and his successor, Mgr. Saint-Marc, in 1841, embracing P. Louis, softened the hardness of these words by saying: 'My good Fathers, henceforth you will not be simply tolerated.' The future did not respond to these hopeful promises. Two years later the Bishop organised, under the direction of M. l'abbé Brecha and of the diocesan missionaries, a college which has become the Institution of Saint-Vincent. P. Louis, seeing this rival house of the Capuchins spring up, allowed himself to address his just observations to Mgr. Saint-Marc. The Bishop displeased took up again the project of his predecessor, and desired to reunite the Congregation of P. Eudes and that of the Immaculate

Conception, and both in a great measure to be under his dependence. New refusal of P. Louis; new disgrace. This good Father had nevertheless great need of consolation, for he had just lost many of his best subjects, among them M. Guy Lera'y, whom he believed to be the holiest and most capable of his children. However in the midst of these trials Providence accorded him some few joys. An important foundation was made in a small town of the same diocese, at Redon, where everything indicated a brilliant prospect for a future college. Situated on the confines of the three departments, Ille-et-Vilaine, Morbihan, and Loire-Inférieure, not far from the towns of Rennes and Nantes, in one of the most delightful of countries, it would be impossible for it not to develop rapidly.

‘Redon,’ we read in the *Littoral de la France*, ‘strikes the visitor with all the more delight, as the western route which leads to it is most uninteresting. The surroundings do not contradict this first impression. To confirm it, it suffices to gain the hill of Beaumont, at the foot of which it is situated. A part of the horizon then presents itself, framed by hills which are crowned by beautiful chestnut trees, the glory of the country.’ The new establishment was in the middle of the town, and covered the remains of the beautiful Benedictine Abbey, which was founded in the ninth century by St. Convoïn. A vast cloister perfectly intact is the admiration of visitors, and particularly of

170 CONGREGATION OF JESUS AND MARY

archæologists. A terrace, which commands a view of the immense fields of Vilaine, rises above the remains of the most beautiful of the ramparts, constructed by Jean du Tréal in the fourteenth century. In 1838, these buildings and dependencies were bought by an ecclesiastic, M. Vannier, who there established a small college. The following year, P. Gaudaire was named superior of this institution, of which we shall speak hereafter.

Another establishment, the small seminary of Guérande, was offered to P. Louis in 1814, by M. de Courson, Superior of the seminary of Nantes. P. Divet was sent there with some other Eudists, and soon he had the satisfaction of seeing many good candidates ask admission to the noviciate. But in 1846, M. de Courson, elected superior of Saint-Sulpice, left Nantes to go to Paris, and the diocesan administration became so irksome to congregations occupied in teaching, that they were forced to abandon Guérande.

In 1840, P. Louis made a better purchase, that of the property 'Roche-du-Theil,' near Redon, where they hoped soon to establish a seminary of the Congregation. Before him the Trappist religious of Mortagne had been on the point of settling there, but this never took place. Happy to be quit of the monks, whom he feared as neighbours, says P. Dauphin in the life of P. Louis, and fearing that the owner, Mme. du Bot, would bring in another community, the curé of Bains advised

her to sell Roche-du-Theil, and to this end brought from Nantes a wealthy purchaser of property, who offered the sum of 60,000 fr., and the bargain was about to be concluded, when on visiting the 'Calvary,' the buyer exclaimed, 'What a unique place for three windmills!' These words were carried to Mme. du Bot, and when the buyer returned to make the last arrangements, she said to him: 'Sir, you offer 60,000 fr. for my property, I will ask 100,000 fr., which you will not agree to, you may therefore retire.' Some time after, P. Louis bought Roche-du-Theil for 40,000 fr., with the charge of a Mass in perpetuity. Notwithstanding so many labours, preoccupations and cares, P. Louis continually gave retreats to communities in the convents of Our Lady of Charity; was occupied with his monasteries, and developed, in the diocese of Rennes, the 'Société des Filles du Cœur Admirable,' the rule of which he had reprinted. Desirous to obtain the approbation of the Holy See for the Institute and the constitutions of P. Eudes, he undertook a journey to Rome which consoled him for many of his troubles, and he then obtained the mortal remains of Saint Théophile for the Capuchins, and those of Sainte Philomène for the Refuge of Saint Cyr.

Already at that time the Congregation numbered, besides the lay brothers, forty-seven members, of whom twenty-six were priests. But many more were needed to supply the demands for foundations

which were daily increasing. Thus P. Louis was obliged to refuse the small seminary of Limoges and that of Paris, the college of Pontelevey, the colonial seminary of the Holy Ghost of Paris, the large seminary of Montauban, and that of Versailles. For some time P. Louis felt his strength gradually diminishing, and he frequently complained of headaches. On the 17th January 1849, after having attended all the exercises of the community, he was going to celebrate Mass, when he heard that a priest had overturned a ciborium full of hosts on the steps of the altar. He was much grieved and after his Mass remained three quarters of an hour in prayer to make reparation to our Lord. When he left the church, the father of a family was waiting for alms; P. Louis went secretly to the bakehouse for a loaf, and having given it to the man, went to the refectory. Struck suddenly by an attack of apoplexy, he fell down and was found half-an-hour later on the floor. He was carried to his room, the last sacraments were administered to him, and from that time the malady increased, until he gave up his soul to God on the 30th January. His body lies at Roche-du-Theil, and his heart is preserved in the new Church of the Capuchins.

P. Louis-Alexis Gaudaire, superior of the college of Redon for ten years, was elected superior-general on the 19th February 1849. Born in 1805 at Méneac, in Morbihan, he came to the novitiate of Saint Gabriel in 1837, after leaving the seminary

of Saint Sulpice. Animated with a great spirit of faith, gifted with delicate tact, self-denying, under a dignified and austere appearance he hid simple tastes, humble sentiments of himself, a tender soul, and a heart full of goodness. Even after his election he retained the superiority of the college of Redon, which owes to him all its prosperity. Personally superintending the studies, visiting the classes, presiding at the examinations, he gave such an impetus to this institution, that with the assistance of the Count of Salvandy, he obtained for it the privilege of full exercise many years before the law 'Falloux.' Thus the college of Redon became at this time the most flourishing of the West, and though it has preserved its reputation, it was never more noble or more patronised than in 1850 and during the following years. It would be impossible to enumerate the valiant Christians, the distinguished men it has furnished to the Church, the state, the army, and the navy.

Not far from Redon, as we have already said, lies the property Roche-du-Theil which was bought in 1840. P. Gaudaire who regretted to see the sacerdotal education of his children confided to the Sulpician Fathers, sincerely devoted friends it is true, but not the Eudists, conceived the idea of building there a seminary with the view of organising the theological course with the exercises of the novitiate. While awaiting the completion of this building, nine students under the direction of P. Divet

took possession of the old manor, the former property of the Benedictines of Redon. The house was not very fine, the church was very poor, the common dormitory narrow ; but these defects were amply repaid by the pure air, the cool shelters of the foliage, a vast horizon, a solitary hill, surmounted by an immense cross which overlooked the country, and seemed to invite one to kneel at the feet of Christ suspended between heaven and earth. Looking down, the eye rested on a beautiful panorama, and could follow the winding of both the rivers Oust and Vilaine, even to the ruins of the celebrated Château of Rieux. These rivers flow between rising grounds sometimes covered with flowers, but oftener with heath or fir trees. Under the influence of this dreamlike beauty and descending the hill to return to the seminary, one passes through a series of small cemeteries, where lie the Fathers and Brothers of the Congregation. In 1854, a new building, consisting of more than thirty cells, and a beautiful small Gothic church, replaced the old construction. Mgr. Saint-Marc blessed the church and was pleased to give a mark of interest to the Eudists. Addressing himself to P. Gaudaire, he said : ‘ May you see your religious family multiply as the stars of the firmament, but, in the meanwhile receive from to-day the reward of your merits and virtues.’ So saying he took off the hood worn by Vicars-General to place it on the shoulders of P. Gaudaire, while the masters and pupils of Redon

College loudly applauded. This seminary is now insufficient to accommodate all its inmates. It has sheltered many hundreds of Eudists, who were instructed and formed by chosen priests; among them we may mention P. Coyer, professor of theology and superior of the seminary of Saint-Gabriel for twenty-three years. Great was the joy of P. Gaudaire to see his hopes almost surpassed. But as the labourers became more numerous the field of the father of the family increased at the same time.

In 1855, he sent some Fathers to Paris for the almonry of the convent of Saint-Michel. The same year Mgr. Daniel, bishop of Coutances, recalled the Eudists to the small seminary of Valognes which they had occupied before the Revolution.

P. Coubard, a man of good judgment, great experience, and easy of access, was the superior for first year, and was afterwards replaced by P. Macé, a priest remarkable for his sanctity, his uprightness, his complacency, and his minute regularity. For eleven years he maintained discipline and piety in the seminary, which was always renowned for its learning and good spirit.

In 1856 Mgr. Daniel again sent for the Eudists for the retreats and missions of his diocese. At first he established them at Villiers, a small locality near Saint-James. Among them we may signal out P. Barbey d'Aurevilly, who had recently entered the Congregation. This valiant missionary, whose

name is not forgotten in Normandy, did not begin his theological studies until he was twenty-four years of age, after having attacked by satirical poetry and by the paper, *Momus Normand*, the government of July. Nothing equalled the rapture, particularly the poetical rapture, of this ardent nature. In a collection of his poetry, published by M. Dauphin, we must admire the beauty of the rhythm, the breathing of idealism that occurs in the strophes, the prodigious facility which makes one feel that it issues from his pen.

Three years later the Bishop of Coutances requested the missionaries to leave Villiers for a new residence at Périers, where large establishments suitable for a college were unoccupied. They remained there until 1872, when they themselves bought a new house, at Donville, near Granville, on the borders of the sea and near the railway station. They immediately constructed a small temporary chapel in honour of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which has since been replaced by a very fine church.

In 1856 the Congregation was also summoned to Luçon by Mgr. Delamarre for the opening of a college which Mgr. Baillès, his predecessor, had left unfurnished. The directors of the college of Richelieu, which was destined for the children of the better classes of La Vendée, were struck by the grandeur of its constructions, and the attention given to the light, airiness, and hygienic

arrangements. Occupied by the Eudists until they had to return to their new college of Versailles, it also acquired under their direction a reputation for piety, labour and literary success, which up to the present it still enjoys under the direction of the priests of the diocese.

Thus did P. Gaudaire unstintedly utilise the zeal and devotedness of his young recruits whose number daily increased. He also furnished missionaries to Mgr. Poirier, who was a native of Redon, a Eudist, and bishop of Roseau at Dominica. This did not prevent him from sending a small colony of his priests to Marseilles, to supply the two refuges of the boulevard Baille and Sainte-Marguerite.

The success of all these enterprises, united to the encouragements that came from the Supreme Head of the Church, was strength and consolation to this superior so zealous for the glory of God. He was simply transported with joy when he received from Rome in 1851 and 1857 laudatory decrees for the Institute of the Eudists and their works; when in 1863, he himself was the bearer of the constitutions revised by the last general assembly, to the Holy City, when he knelt at the feet of Pius IX., and when in 1865 he received the approbation *ad decennium* of these same constitutions; finally, when he undertook in 1868, through Mgr. Hugonin, bishop of Bayeux, the cause of the beatification of P. Eudes.

While the college of Redon and the Congregation

of the Eudists were flourishing under P. Gaudaire, P. Delanoë, successor of P. Louis, rebuilt the house of the Capuchins, called 'Institution Saint Martin.' Nothing in the magnificent constructions we admire to-day, in the Gothic church, which, on account of the purity of its style, the perfection of its outlines, does honour to the talent of Canon Brune, nothing recalls the sombre cloister, the narrow windows, and the dilapidated church of this old Capuchin convent almost in ruins and condemned by the authorities. The transformation has been complete, and P. Delanoë reveals himself as a skilful administrator during the twenty-seven years of his presidency at Saint-Martin. But his glory and his merits consist in having procured from the diocese of Rennes a notable part of his clergy. Nothing could equal the zeal of this devoted superior, his lively faith, his piety, his natural goodness hidden under an appearance of reserve and austerity. His manner at first sight appeared cold and icy; but the shrewd observation of his pupils soon discovered, under the austere appearance, depths of affection. They became sincerely attached to him, and he, on his side, gained all their respect and confidence.

His successors at Saint-Martin, and particularly P. Gahier, have continued to keep up the reputation of this establishment, which was a veritable hive of sacerdotal vocations and a school of good Christians. P. Gahier laboured in this institution

for eighteen years, and when he became superior he retained the ancient traditions of PP. Louis and Delanoë. About the year 1870, the health of P. Gaudaire broke down, and many a crisis had already alarmed him, when on Easter Tuesday night a more violent attack suddenly came upon him, to which he succumbed. The unexpected news of his death was untold grief for the town of Redon, and for all the children of P. Eudes.

In July of the same year, a general assembly elected as his successor, P. Ange Le Doré, who was only thirty-six years of age. This new superior, gifted with a judgment penetrating and far-seeing which was denied to P. Gaudaire, immediately concentrated all his activity on the duties of his heavy charge, and was not diverted from them except for the publication of works destined to make known V. P. Eudes, and by the conducting of ecclesiastical retreats. This last work is the surest way of making known throughout the dioceses of France the vitality of an institution too long ignored.

From the following year he took up his abode in a new residence of the missionaries, called the Sacred Heart, and established in a faubourg of Redon. In this solitude exempt from the cares of the administration of a college, he was enabled to devote himself to the general interests of the entire congregation. The Fathers of this residence during thirty years have evangelised all the dioceses of

the neighbourhood; and those of Nantes and Vannes have preserved the remembrance of P. Maignan though it is nearly half a century ago since he lived amongst them. He was indefatigable for the glory of God; gifted with an uncommon voice and with true eloquence, which coming from the heart and from conviction can alone carry weight, he stirred up the country people by vehement and popular preaching. He died at the 'Sacred Heart' at the age of 84 years, and laboured until the end of his life. Since then the missionaries of Brittany have been transported to the novitiate of Hennebont of which we shall soon speak.

In 1873, a new college was purchased, that of St. Francis Xavier at Besançon, founded twenty-four years before by M. Besson, afterwards bishop of Nîmes, who has since died. M. Besson, superior of this establishment, was more occupied in preaching than in the government of his house; thus, he left to his successors a hard task in the office of carrying out discipline. It was not without trouble and in a single day that they could bring to perfection labour and study. A short time after the arrival of the Eudists, a Franc-Comtois, M. Baille, a talented painter and a pious Christian, proposed to decorate the church gratuitously with four large frescoes, representing the finding of the relics of St. Ferréol and St. Ferjeux and the triumphal entry into Besançon of these venerated remains. These frescoes are masterpieces valued at 1,000,000 fr.;

one could not tire of admiring the noble and sweet figures radiant with celestial light; in fact these efforts of the artist seemed simply inspired works of art; he did not sit at the easel until he had prepared himself by assisting at the holy sacrifice of the Mass and receiving Holy Communion. He reproduced in such perfection the choirs, the walls, and windows of the basilica of Favernay, that one day a bird, finding its way into the church vainly struck many times against the light it fancied it saw between the grating. The school of St. Francis Xavier is known and esteemed throughout Franche-Comté. At the same time that the Congregation extended, the students and novices of the house of theological studies, Roche-du-Theil, also increased: the beehive becoming too small it was necessary they should find other settlements. But where were they to go? The question was easily decided. The bishop of Vannes, Mgr. Becel, full of esteem and affection for P. Le Doré, for a long time had desired a house to be opened in his diocese. At first meaningless opposition was raised by M. l'abbé Pinel, the owner of an old community on the Quai Blavet at Hennebont. In the meantime a nice property about a mile and a half outside the town, with extensive grounds and large lakes was put up for sale. After many observations on account of the striking appearance of the house, the bargain was completed and the novitiate installed there.

Hennebont is a charming little town built on two slopes, and between them flows the river Blavet. The picturesque borders of this small river, the proximity of the sea, a remarkable viaduct, a beautiful church, a fine school directed by the Ursulines, a number of châteaux scattered through the neighbourhood lend their charms to this enchanting country. The traveller would desire the train to go more slowly. What are, he wonders, these important looking buildings surrounded by gardens and terraces, closed in by gigantic trees, and surmounted by a small tower and granite cross? They are, he is told, Kerlois which became the Eudist novitiate in 1876. The aspect is charming, the sight delightful, and one's admiration could not fail to be riveted on such exquisite beauty.

This foundation, as usual, was founded on the cross. A month had scarcely elapsed when the superior died, regretted even by those who had little known him, but had already appreciated his worth.

Under the shadow of the cross the novitiate increased, and soon the old château became too small, when the decrees of expulsion for unapproved religions were issued. The situation was grave and disturbance reigned at Kerlois for many days, when the commissioner at Hennebont presented himself one morning at six o'clock accompanied by gendarmes and by a locksmith. He knocked at the outer door and asked admittance, saying he had

come to put the seals on the church doors. P. Gobert, superior, refused; the locksmith tried to wrench open the lock, but his efforts were useless. At last, the superior being assured that the church only would be closed, that the Blessed Sacrament and all the sacred vessels could be removed into another oratory, let them pass, but they were insulted and even menaced by an indignant crowd.

Five years later, we read in the paper 'La Croix,' 'One of those unfortunate locksmiths, who in 1881 did not blush to lend his assistance to force in the locks, has just died at Hennebont, showing sentiments of repentance which it would be well to make known. After having made his confession, he called to his bedside a number of men, acknowledged to them how much he regretted the guilty act he had committed in obedience to the commissaire's orders, adding that for a long time he was tortured with remorse of conscience. The Rev. Father Superior of the Eudists made it a point to be present at the interment.

The number of novices always increasing, it became necessary to build; and in 1888 a vast building containing sixty cells was erected, which was blessed the following year by Mgr. Becel, bishop of Vannes.

One day in September, when the building was nearly completed, all the novices had gone to Lorient and the Superior alone remained at Kerlois to direct the work. An enormous block of granite

was being lifted up by a windlass twenty metres high; when it reached the top, the chain broke. The stone dragged down with it the two men who had already caught hold of it, and in its fall smashed the scaffolding on which four men were working the windlass. Then a frightful crash ensued and cries of distress were heard on every side; it was a calamity which, though it happened many years ago, still makes one shudder. The majority of the workmen were so terrified that they had to be called back to release an unfortunate mason who was buried under bricks and beams. The wounded were immediately stretched on mattresses and carried to the hospital at Hennebont. Happily only one of the number was disabled. The new buildings have again become insufficient, and the construction of a church will be necessary, if in the future we can hope for the keeping up of congregations. This rapid development of the Society of the Eudists is due, in a great measure, to the zeal of the superior-general who has resided at Paris since 1877, to the exertions of the missionaries and of many other Fathers who have made known and appreciated P. Eudes, and also it is owing to the establishment of an apostolic school which is daily becoming more flourishing. It was in 1871 that P. Dauphin, director of the novices at Roche-du-Theil, confided to them the instruction of a child of the neighbourhood. He received many more during the following years, and in 1877 they numbered

fifteen. The good spirit which reigned among these children made the task light. One of them being charged with the duty of surveillance, they would impose upon themselves a penance if they infringed the rule of silence, coming at the same time to acknowledge their fault. The growing success of this work engages the attention of the council of the congregation in order to separate it from the novitiate. In the meanwhile a favourable occasion turned up at Plancoët in the Côtes-du-Nord ; a house was bought and the juveniles installed there. Their number soon increased to twenty-five and is now past fifty. This nursery, formed of the children of the best families of Brittany, has already furnished many recruits to the novitiate and to all the houses of the Society. It is besides established in the midst of a sympathetic population. We have had experience of this during these days of trial. At the first threats of expulsion, in consequence of the famous decree of 1881, a locksmith unexpectedly presented himself. He did not come to force the locks, but on the contrary, to put strong bolts on the doors, telling us that he would do so gratuitously. Soon the principal and the garden gates were securely fastened by strong bolts. The next day the governors arrived, and without consulting us, from 7 o'clock in the morning to 7 o'clock in the evening, and for a whole week, ranged themselves round the house. Meanwhile the threats of expulsion were loudly proclaimed, and it is said that the sub-prefect

of Dinan, which is twelve miles distant, would call a squadron of cavalry; emissaries went to Dinan to watch for the day, taking their stations in the neighbouring houses of the sub-prefect, and the provost-marshal was accompanied every time he walked in the street. One morning we were told that some workmen were carrying materials in order to erect barricades before the house; we did our best to oppose them, but that was impossible. This was on a Wednesday, and about thirty priests had come to assist that morning at the interment of a curé. After the déjeuner, M. l'abbé Dagorne, superior of the Collège des Cordeliers, at Dinan, said: "Gentlemen, if it be pleasing to you, we will go to see the Eudist Fathers and offer them our sympathy." Seeing this long file of priests pass through the town, the people followed them with olive branches which they had purchased the preceding days. They believed the fatal moment had arrived. The avenue, the gardens were invaded; the church was filled with people who all together recited the rosary: it was an effervescence we could not describe. Lastly, the clock sounded, the children came out, and with a joyful air passed through the astonished crowd. On every side we were asked where they were going 'to walk,' we answered, 'it is the day and the hour!' The good Plancoëtains, disconcerted at this calm appearance, returned, not without begging us to be on our guard and assuring us that they them-

selves would keep watch. During this sad week, which began by the death of one of our children, nine mayors from Plancoët and the surrounding communes spent entire days at the 'juvénat,' esteeming it an honour to assist us if we were turned out of doors. The same sympathy and the same demonstration, I am sure, would be again shown if similar circumstances were renewed.

In 1878 Mgr. Bataille, Bishop of Amiens, called as missionaries the Eudists to Abbeville, where they were settled in an old convent which the Dominicans had just vacated. The superior, Père Courtellemont, has resided there since that time, and he, as well as his confrères, unceasingly visit the north and middle parts of France to preach Advent and Lenten sermons, retreats, and missions. They have erected at their residence a confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, canonically approved in 1880. A confraternity of another kind was also constituted in 1883, in the church of Notre Dame des Armées, at Versailles, at the request of P. Gueusset, superior of this house. This work of the military Almonry, undertaken before the war of 1870, has seen many Fathers devote themselves on the battlefield. The war ended, they installed themselves in the Rue des Bourdonnais, but they have since left this house in order to be nearer the barracks.

They were replaced in the rue des Bourdonnais in 1878, by the school Saint-Jean, which P. Paignon founded under the following circumstances. A

number of good families were very anxious to see a free establishment for secondary instruction opened in their town, so as not to be obliged to send their children to the Lyceum or to the small seminary.

A private company was organised under M. de Maismont; a personal request was addressed to R. P. Le Doré, and P. Paignon responded to it; he was a clever and thoughtful administrator, of a judicious mind, a man of tact and delicacy. Unhappily for them he died during the year, and the future of this institution seemed greatly in peril. However, it came victoriously through the trial; in time the house became too small, and it was removed to the healthiest and most suitable quarter in Versailles. A large building and church have since been erected under P. Régnault, who was superior for eleven years. For five or six years, from 1885, the Eudists have also given their assistance to the diocese of Evreux, at the request of the bishop, who selected them for the small college of Ecouis.

In 1891, the construction of the basilica of Jeanne d'Arc, at Domremy, to which a renowned architect, M. Sédille, was generous enough to offer his services and even his own means, was confided by Mgr. Sonnois to the children of P. Eudes.

'I have chosen in preference the community of the RR. PP. Eudists,' Mgr. Sonnois wrote in 1894, 'because after our lamentable disasters of 1870-71, they have been the first to understand that our national

uprising should, as in the olden days of the English invasion, place its hopes and its efforts under the safeguard of a superior and Christian order; they have taken the initiative by founding at Versailles, the work of Notre-Dame des Armées, so meritorious and so freely accepted, from its beginning, by the highest patronage.' M. l'abbé Mourot says, in his work on Domremy, 'The PP. Eudists were temporally installed in a dependency of the presbytery, and began their crusade in favour of the work under the title of Missionnaires de Jeanne d'Arc. Both P. Marchal and P. Létendard possessed beautiful and useful qualities suitable for the great undertaking. P. Létendard brought to it a predestined name.' It is to their zeal and devotedness we owe the incomparable monument which has since been erected, and which is the admiration of visitors.

But we must not leave France without mentioning the Fathers of the Paris house who were chaplains to the communities of the Refuge Saint-Michel, to the novitiate of the sisters of Saint-Thomas-de-Villeneuve, to the orphanage in the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, to the Refuge Bon Pasteur, to the sisters of Marie-Joseph at the dépôt of the prefecture of police, to the nursing sisters of the boulevard Arago, to the work of Saint-Raphael reorganised by P. Dauphin at Antony; and those also who were chaplains to the Bon Pasteur at Conflans, Notre-Dame de Charité du Refuge at

Versailles and at Caen; we must also mention that the direction of the seminary of Soissons was taken from the Eudists in 1898, by a new bishop who was too anxious to yield to the desires of the government; and, lastly, we must name the house of Angers, where some students pursue the course of the Catholic University, and also at Rome, where they devote themselves to ecclesiastical studies, under the care of P. Mallet, postulator of the cause of the beatification of V. P. Eudes. Notwithstanding our desire to abridge this notice we cannot pass over in silence the foundations which have been made in America.

In 1880, many Fathers repaired thither under the direction of P. Coste, who went for three years to evangelise Troy, a pretty city of about six thousand inhabitants, not far from New York, on the borders of the Hudson River. The town is composed of Protestant and Catholic Canadians. The latter, French by language, but still more so in heart, gave the greatest consolation to the Fathers. But soon a more lasting foundation was realised at the bay Sainte-Marie in Canada. In 1890 P. Blanchard and P. Marin went there to supply two small parishes, and to erect a college by the sea. The climate is harsh, the cold intense, the wind frequent and violent, winter lasts until the month of May, the families are numerous, sometimes they number more than ten children, the land is almost uncultivated except near the dwellings which border the

seashore. 'Robbery is little known there, and though there are no police,' wrote one of the Fathers to his family, 'clothes are left hanging out on the roadsides, and nothing is stolen.'

The college was regulated according to the English custom, two classes in the morning, and two in the evening. All was going on wonderfully well in the college Sainte-Anne, which adjoins Sainte-Marie, when, in 1893, a fire broke out in the middle of the night at the presbytery where the Fathers resided, and everything was destroyed in less than an hour. The inmates had time only to escape. This is not to be wondered at in a country where the houses are almost all built of wood, except the foundations, and where warming pipes are kept lighted nearly the whole year round. But that was only the first trial, and it was a small one. On the 16th January, 1899, P. Blanche wrote to R. P. Le Doré: 'A great misfortune has just happened to us; our beloved college no longer exists, it was burned down last night. My God! what will become of us? What shall we do? When the presbytery only was burned we could begin work the next day; but now all is destroyed. We must begin all over again and under more difficult circumstances than at the very beginning. On Sunday we were to take definite possession of our new building. I chanted the High Mass; and at Vespers, admiring the beautiful ceremonies we could perform in our new church, and listening to the children singing, I thanked God

that the work was finally completed. Some hours after, only the ashes remained of what had cost us so many labours and anxieties. We abandon ourselves to Providence, may It watch over us.' The college has since been rebuilt, but not without great labours and many sacrifices.

A short time after the foundation of the college Sainte-Anne, Mgr. O'Brien, Archbishop of Halifax, satisfied with the good that was being accomplished by the Fathers, requested them to undertake the direction of a large seminary at Halifax, which should be at the same time a scholastical college for the Congregation. The edifice has been erected near the monastery of the Good Shepherd, to which P. Marin was chaplain. Already, on the 19th June 1900, five students, all Eudists, were called to the priesthood, four, of whom one was a diocesan seminarist, to the sub-deaconship. The cathedral of Halifax had never been a witness of such a numerous ordination. And also on that day the inhabitants, accustomed to see those young men dressed in the costume of the clergy, were not a little surprised to see them going through the town in their soutanes. All seems hopeful of the rapid development of this new undertaking.

But, before leaving North America we will pass by Caraquet, the maritime parish of New Brunswick. The majority of its inhabitants are Acadians, who are blessed with a lively faith, filled with veneration for the priest, and animated with a great

devotion to the Blessed Virgin. The family rosary is recited every evening, and they are so faithful to this practice, that if they go to any dance against the desire of their priest, the dancers do not separate until they have recited the Rosary.

For some time an old curé, M. Allard, had purchased some ground in front of his presbytery, and constructed a three story house without making known his intentions, which were the education of the young in this secluded part of the maritime provinces. The building was completed, and since 1899 the small seminary exists. 'If the pupils are not yet numerous,' the fathers tell us, 'they are not the less our consolation. They are polite, amiable, and most assiduous in prayer. They sing extremely well, and have particular affection for the chants of the Church. Those who are privileged to enter our church return astonished.' There also great good shall be done, and the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will be honoured in these countries.

If we leave the snow of Caraquet and the bay of Sainte-Marie, to descend to South America, at Carthagena, in Columbia, we shall arrive at a town which is a stranger to the cold and snow, and where the people can only sleep on mats. The humid warmth which is between 27° and 32° C. is enervating: and at every hour of the day Columbians, both men and women, are to be seen sitting at their doors looking at the passers by.

In 1883, the diocese of Carthagená, numbering about 300,000 Catholics, scattered on land about the area of the sixth part of France, had for its Bishop, Mgr. Biffi.

This good old prelate shuddered when he thought of his forty-seven priests, the majority of them advanced in years, and to see sixty-two parishes without pastors. And also, there was no seminary in the diocese, and for two years Mgr. Biffi had uselessly applied to all the religious congregations to establish this work. His Holiness, Leo XIII., judged the affair sufficiently important for his consideration, and he sent a letter to P. Le Doré, telling him that his most ardent desire was to see the sons of V. P. Jean Eudes prepare in New Grenada holy and devoted priests, like those which their fathers had procured in the seventeenth century for the Church of France. His Holiness added: 'God will pour abundant blessings on this apostolic work, and this blessing shall extend to your entire institute, and shall be for it a pledge of prosperity and happiness.' A desire of the Vicar of Jesus Christ for the children of V. P. Eudes could be nothing but a command. P. Hamon, who has lately died, and P. Dufouil left their country; soon many others followed them and the seminary was founded. And on the 20th November 1885, our Holy Father receiving in private audience P. Le Doré said to him: 'I thank you particularly for having sent priests to Carthagená. I look upon

✱

that diocese as mine; I take a great interest in it, and all that your fathers have done there, it is for me. I admire and I bless their self-sacrifice, tell them so from me.'

Since that time new houses have been founded in Columbia, and already, in the report given to the general assembly of the congregation in 1891, P. Hamon said to his confrères: 'In Columbia we possess three distinct seminaries, three diocesan seminaries belonging to the three different dioceses, namely, that of Carthagená on the coast of the Caribbean Sea, and those of Antioquia and Pamplona in the interior. These seminaries are about one hundred miles distant from each other, and are purely ecclesiastical schools, with the exception of Pamplona, where lay scholars are admitted. They are at the same time small and large seminaries, and pupils from ten to twenty years of age are received, provided they can read and write sufficiently well. We are well satisfied with our seminarists, with their spirit of piety, docility, and gratitude, their application to labour, and their progress in virtue and learning. They number about sixty in each of the seminaries.'

Five years later in 1896, P. de Martini, Vicar-General of Columbia, gave the same testimony adding: 'We can number fifty-five or sixty new priests formed by our fathers, who are at present employed in the holy ministry. On every side we hear their praises, and recently the Archbishop of

Bogota passing through Carthagena asked me the following question: "Who has formed the two priests who are at present at Mompos?" "We have, Monsieur." "I congratulate you," responded His Grace, "they are very good subjects." Let us add,' continues P. Martini, 'that in Columbia the priest, if he does not wish to be contemned, ought to be instructed, for everywhere he meets learned persons, and those who have passed the universities of Columbia or of Europe.'

Since 1896 P. Dufouil, after having supplied the town of Mompos, became curé of Sabanalarga, with P. Joulan as vicar. This town numbers 12,000 inhabitants, of whom 8,000 are scattered in the *pueblos*, separated from twelve to fifteen miles from each other, and can communicate only by roads so narrow, that troops can pass along only in single file. The houses of Sabanalarga, covered over by palms, have the appearance of cottages. Alas! all this country for fifteen months is in a state of revolution, and consequently the works of which we speak suffer from it; certain seminaries have been obliged to obtain a license from time to time, and the price of food in the besieged towns is exorbitant. Peace seems to return little by little.

This rapid enumeration of the establishments confided to the Eudist Fathers shows us, particularly during these later years, the development of this unpretending congregation, which seeks only the glory of God and the salvation of souls, always

remaining faithful to its early traditions, strongly attached to the Catholic doctrine, and to the defence of the church.

The Abbé Mourat renders it a beautiful testimony in his work on Domremy: 'Throughout the war, nothing nobler, nothing more brave, than to carry, in the face of danger, the country's flag of honour. P. Le Doré has been the standard-bearer of the Church, in combating the infernal powers against religious congregations. In a rescript of the 15th September 1895, which shall ever be a glory for the Eudist Fathers, His Holiness, Leo XIII., has recognised that P. Le Doré, during his generalate, deserved from the Church and from the Congregation *Optime merito*. He has blessed it with a special benediction: *Perlibente animo*.' We may add: God preserve him for many long years, for the strife is not yet over!

CHAPTER II

INSTITUTE OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

OF all the works of mercy none is more excellent than that which has for its end the salvation of souls. Here then is the work of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity; it is for this they entirely devote themselves after the example of Him who has said: 'I have come to seek and save that which was lost'; a sublime mission among all others, it is in truth approaching more nearly to the priesthood, which demands a burning faith, a supernatural love for souls, persevering patience, an inexhaustible devotedness joined to the most delicate tact. In truth, it is to rescue souls, to shelter them from the snares and dangers of the world. This double end immediately shows us an essential division in the organisation of the work. As there must be a preservation class, and one in which those who have fallen into sin may be raised once again to a new life of grace, of necessity there must be two distinct categories entirely separated from each other: that of the Preservation and that of the Penitents; each is divided into classes more or less

numerous according to the number of the children, or according to the kind of work. But all intercourse is prohibited between these two sections. If on the one hand we admire innocence and candour, naïve piety, and happy faces; on the other hand we find fervent prayer, generous sacrifices, good will, assiduous labour, affectionate obedience to a gentle and firm authority. How skilful was the pilot who guided the helm, and how he studied the human heart! Nothing escaped his eye, and knowing all the rocks through which he should steer his bark, he advances with intense watchfulness and constant observation. With wide experience sustained by prayer and grace, he gathers into the port a rich harvest of perishing souls. What a consolation and what a joy for the sisters, when they can recall to the true life those who were perishing. What a happiness for them to see those young girls yesterday enthusiastic about the world, its luxuries and its pleasures, with ardent and passionate hearts, with capricious and insubordinate wills, to-day renouncing all, curbing their imagination, their heart and their habits, becoming pious Magdalens under a religious rule; capable of every sacrifice, of every privation, and practising in the enclosure the most sublime virtues. Nowhere, assuredly, are the effects of the Divine power more admirable.

We have seen how the Revolution destroyed all the monasteries of Our Lady of Charity, and en-

deavoured to blot out their smallest remnant. But the plant was too deeply rooted; it has sprung forth again with new vigour wherever it found a favourable soil. We will briefly go through the countries where it has been revived and fortified.

We took leave of the Sisters of Paris in the Rue Notre-Dame des Champs; they concealed a few faithful priests, and obtained for a bishop the possibility of ordaining some candidates. In 1801 the Superior, Mère M. de l'Enfant-Jésus Duquesne, was imprisoned as an accomplice in the conspiracy against the first Consul. This is explained by her accepting as a tenant without having any knowledge, Carnot, the inventor of the explosion of the infernal machine. In 1802 the Sisters went to occupy the convent of the Presentation, where they resided until they bought the house of the Visitandines, in the Rue Saint-Jacques, where they still live. In 1807 Napoleon consented to declare them of public use in assimilating them to the Sisters of Charity. According to these new statutes, the order of Our Lady of Charity should have a Superior-General, and place themselves at the discretion of the civil administration for the service of hospitals and prisons. The Sisters lived tranquilly enough until 1830. They then had the consolation of concealing Mgr. de Quélen from the searches of the populace who desired his death. In 1848 their church and a part of the house became an ambulance for those wounded at the barricades. We regret

we cannot here relate all the sufferings, vexations, mortal anxieties, which these religious had to endure during the siege of Paris, and during the reign of the Commune; this would lead us aside from our way.

The Sisters of Caen were re-united since 1795. They even opened a small school in a separate house named 'La Petite-Charité.' It was only in 1805 that the government permitted them to receive penitents; but at the same time forbidding them to take vows. Meanwhile all desired to return to their old convent, which had been transformed into a barracks. Sœur Marie de Sainte-Dosithée was sent to Paris to negotiate about this affair. She was happy enough to obtain it, after skilful and innumerable gradations, which were rendered more difficult on account of refusing to sign the statutes accepted by the monastery of Paris. She even succeeded in 1808, on the feast of the Heart of Mary, in obtaining approval for the ancient rules of the Institute. The community was composed of twenty-eight religious and fifty children when they returned to their devastated convent.

From Caen we will pass to Versailles and speak of the year 1804. We find there an old Sister of Vannes, Marie de Saint-Hippolyte de Botmilliau, who came first to the convent of Paris, in which M. Fustier was chaplain. This ecclesiastic, convinced that a Refuge would be useful in the suburbs of the capital, and particularly at Versailles, a garrison town, came to an agreement with the

Bishop of the place, and deputed the new foundation to Mother Saint-Hippolyte. Two former Sisters of Vannes joined her at Etioles, then at Versailles in the quarter Saint-Louis. The property of the quarter of Montreuil, which is occupied at the present time by about sixty religious and many hundreds of children, was purchased in 1806. Important and wise restorations have been made in the buildings these latter years, and have completely changed the aspect of this fine monastery.

It was also a professed religious of Vannes, Mother M. de Saint-François Sauvet, who re-united the first sisters at Tours in 1804, and with them definitively established the community in 1806. But soon discouraged at not being able to organise a class of penitents, she wished to return to catholic Brittany, but failed in bringing all the Sisters with her. At first this poor monastery was forsaken, but about the year 1812 the virtues, talent, and rare qualities of a young sister, Marie de Sainte-Victoire, became known and attracted many postulants, among them Mlle. Rose-Virginie Pelletier, the future foundress of the Good Shepherd of Angers. At the school of sœur Sainte-Victoire, Mlle. Pelletier learned the art of directing souls; she was admitted to profession in 1817, and was elected Superior in 1825. We also find at this time Superior of Tours, Sœur Saint-Hippolyte, whom we have just mentioned at Versailles.

The convent 'La Rochelle' was re-established in 1807 by its former Superior, Mother Sainte-Victoire

Chantreaux, seconded by M. l'abbé Saboureau. One of the greatest difficulties was to procure a suitable house. While waiting, and on the point of finding themselves without shelter, the Sisters would often repeat: 'If we are put out on the streets, we shall pitch our tents on the ramparts.' At the last moment they purchased the old residence of the Franciscan Recollects, and only sixteen religious entered the house, the rest had died of old age or sufferings.

At Rennes we have seen the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity expelled from their convent, 'La Trinité,' in 1792. One of them, Sœur Sainte-Eugénie, was able to gather together, in 1828, a few of her Sisters in the Rue de Paris, afterwards in the convent of Saint-Cyr, a part of which for many years was transformed into a barracks. Nevertheless they remained there, and the close vicinity to the soldiers was not so troublesome as they had feared. But they had to endure great misery, were obliged to beg, and often had to await the return of the bread basket for their dinner. At an early time the Refuge of Paris had sent an assistant to Sœur Sainte-Eugénie; the monastery of Caen sent four religious in 1821 to consolidate this foundation, all the former Sisters of 'La Trinite' returned, and the monastery was solidly re-established.

The convent of Montbareil at Saint-Brieuc in 1808 replaced that of Montbareil of Guingamp. The Sisters, re-united from 1799 at Quintin, vainly

endeavoured to return to Guingamp, and ended by purchasing the old monastery of the 'Filles de la Croix' at Saint-Brieuc. The Bishop, Mgr. Caffarelli, brother of the Prefect of Caen, who translated the remains of V. P. Eudes to 'La Gloriette,' presided at the elections and proposed to assign a religious habit for the Sisters. 'But,' we read in the *Annals*, 'we had put on our white habits, and were waiting arranged in double rows. Monseigneur when entering drew back astonished. "Ah! Manoir" (the name of his Vicar), he exclaimed. After a pause he added: "Sisters, we desired to give you a habit, but we could have never given you such a beautiful one." The ecclesiastics present remarked that they thought they had to form religious, but they found religious already formed.'

The community was soon consolidated, and developed rapidly under the skilful direction of Mother Sainte Thérèse-Bonamy, who was elected superior at seven different periods. The foundation of Nantes dates back to 1809. For many years the curé of the cathedral, M. de Tréméac had confided the care of penitents to pious persons. But this organisation could only be temporary, and as he wished to consolidate the future well-being of the work, he addressed himself to the convent of Saint-Michel at Paris, from whence he obtained three Sisters.

In an important town like Lyons it would be surprising if one of these refuges were not established. It was in 1811 that Cardinal Fesch, uncle

of Napoleon and bishop of Lyons, solicited sisters to Paris and six were sent there. A pious lady named Buisset, foundress of a class of orphans, promised the premises and necessary funds on condition of always guarding the children. But soon the superior, Mother Saint-Louis de Gonzague, perceived that Mme. Buisset wanted to hold the temporal administration of the house. She told her it was against the rules of the Institute and also against the engagements that were made. Mme. Buisset would not listen and declared she would confide the orphans to another community. 'If God is not pleased to make use of us to continue your work, Madame,' responded the superior, 'at least we shall have the consolation of knowing that he has made use of you to establish ours in the town, and we shall be always grateful to you.' Nevertheless everything was removed, not even the nails put up for hanging the pictures were allowed to remain. Having neither clothes nor covering of any kind during such a severe season, the Sisters were obliged to sleep in their habits for many weeks. What was to become of them? Prudence urged them to return to Paris, the love for souls pressed them to remain at Lyons. Only two francs still remained, and the Superior gave them to a sister to get Mass said at Notre-Dame de Fourvière. During the celebration of this Mass the curé of the parish Saint Louis presented himself, offering 60,000 francs which he had received for the support of

forty orphans. Thus was the Refuge saved by an all-wise and loving Providence. At present there are three classes, the Orphans, Preservation, and Magdalens. They have also made an addition of a temporary house to afford shelter for young girls out of employment.

The monastery of Valence owes its origin to a vicar general, M. Fièvre, who brought from Paris in 1819, Sœur Marie des Séraphins and a novice from Lyons. He established them some miles outside the town, and two years later removed them into the town itself.

Two zealous ecclesiastics, MM. Berger and Ortric, were the providential instruments in founding the convent of Toulouse, in 1822. They had already confided the direction of fifty penitents to pious ladies, when, to guarantee the security of the work, they decided upon obtaining the assistance of a religious institute. At their request two sisters were sent to them from Caen. The ancient convent 'des Hospitalières' became the cradle of the infant community.

In August 1863, Mother Saint-Pacome Blachet left Caen, where she is at present superior, in company with three sisters for Bartestree, in Herefordshire. They went to take possession of a very fine convent built by Mr. Robert Phillipps, who was converted to the Catholic Faith through attending a mission. One of those, Sister Mary of Saint Peter of Alcantara, sent to Caen in 1856 by the celebrated P. de

Ravignan, was the eldest daughter of the founder. Our four religious wore their habit even in London, and were nevertheless surrounded by respect. We give the following lines from an English paper, *Hereford Times*: 'The arrival of these ladies offered peculiar interest to the locality. One of them was the only surviving daughter of the founder, and her return among her old acquaintances and friends was the occasion of great joy. The day and hour of the arrival were soon known all around, and everyone endeavoured to do their best to give them a hearty welcome. Two triumphal arches which were erected draped with emblems and inscriptions, such as: Welcome, friends of the poor, testified the joy of all those present. After waiting half an hour, the cry, "Here they are," was heard on every side and Mr. Phillipps's carriage came into sight. In a moment the horses were unharnessed, and the carriage with the religious was drawn by men to the castle, where they were to remain some days before entering the convent. It was a moment of supreme happiness when the father embraced his child. The feelings of their hearts are too sacred to be inscribed here. After some time, Mr. Phillipps, holding his daughter by the hand, stood on the steps and, in a few moving words, thanked all present for the testimony of affection they had shown for his daughter; and as they were all protestants he told them why she was consecrated to God and explained the end of the institute adding

that it would bring down on them many blessings. We must not forget to mention that the bells of the surrounding parishes, though protestant, rang out to commemorate the happy event.' This can be testified to by an eye-witness, Mr. Wathen.

At present this convent contains forty-nine religious and one hundred and forty inmates. The Refuge of Valognes owes its existence to the initiative of P. Coubard, superior of the Missionaries of Périers, to the devotedness of the Eudist Fathers of this residence and of the small seminary. It was also the house of Caen, which in 1868 supplied to Valognes five religious. The rapid development of this monastery obliged them in 1871 to purchase a convent and a spacious enclosure which English Carmelites had before occupied. For the foundation of the monastery of Salzburg in Austria, God made use of a religious, a native of Poland, Sœur Sainte-Thérèse Piller, who, seconded by a venerable Hungarian prelate, obtained the authority of the government in 1866, and was affiliated to the monastery of Caen.

That of Mans was founded sixty-eight years ago by the Good Shepherd at Angers, at the request of M. Moreau, director of the seminary of Mans. Serious differences of opinion soon arose between Mother Saint-Euphrasia Pelletier when she solicited the generalate from Rome for Angers, and M. Moreau who would not hear of it. During this trying time the Sisters suffered great anxiety. It

ended by the separation of the two houses, in which assuredly both parties sought only the Will of God and His greater glory. M. Moreau desired to revise a rule for the Magdalens different from that of P. Eudes, but it was unsuccessful. This fervent community passed through trials of every kind: in 1848, failure of work and resources; in 1871, famine, smallpox, the house filled with sick and suffering members, then the death of eight religious and many children in the space of a few weeks. Notwithstanding, this house since its institution has been an asylum to 3200 children.

In 1836, a new asylum was established at Blois, by some sisters who came from Tours at the request of M. l'abbé Guillois, vicar-general. In the same year one at Montauban was also started, owing to the zeal of M. le chanoine Arnac, who, in the year 1824, with the assistance of some devoted young girls, had undertaken this work. Two sisters and a tourière from Caen supplied their places.

The institute of Our Lady of Charity was installed at Marseilles in 1838; but, from the fourteenth century there is mention made of a penitentiary in this town. Mother Sainte-Victoire Houette came from Tours with six of her companions to succeed the Sisters of Saint-Thomas of Villeneuve, who found themselves unable to govern the penitents with sufficient authority. The daughters of P. Eudes were more successful, and the premises becoming insufficient, they purchased some ground on the

boulevard Baille. As soon as the building was completed, the public, always curious, inquired on what day they would change their quarters. In order to baffle their curiosity the community formed a procession, and walked through the boulevards in silence, by moonlight at 3 o'clock in the morning.

This establishment at Versailles had also to endure many trials, particularly in 1848, when they found themselves without work, without bread, and without money. The market and fish women, however, sent them support, came to the kitchen and gratuitously offered them abundant provisions. The year 1849 was still more terrible, the cholera was raging, one hundred and seventy-two were afflicted with it at the same time, and three religious, seven penitents, and nine children of the Preservation class, died in the space of a few days. In spite of which not only did the community bear up, but was still more deeply rooted, and it has produced a vigorous shoot some little distance from the convent, which seems to give a promise of much good for the future.

We may mention the house of the 'Saint Cœur de Marie,' which sprang up in 1863. The two communities, reunited, have given an asylum to about six thousand souls. The Eudist Fathers are their chaplains, and can testify to innumerable conversions and edifying deaths.

It was also the monastery of Tours which, in 1899, sent a superior to found that of Besançon, with four

religious from Marseilles. Mgr. Mathieu, bishop of this diocese, unceasingly testified the greatest interest in this work, which has increased to such a degree that it became necessary to divide the children into six classes.

In 1853 the Paris house supplied sisters for the direction of a refuge organised at Dublin by a holy priest, Father Smith. At present this institution numbers sixty religious, and over two hundred inmates. A second convent was also established in the same city in the year 1887.

In Italy the foundation of a house at Loretto encountered many obstacles. The sisters of the Good Shepherd of Angers had given it up after a fruitless trial. A lady from Jurieu, who had this work greatly at heart, then came to solicit sisters from the house at Mans; this was in 1856. The ecclesiastical superior, M. Moreau, went to visit Loretto, but did not take the difficulties into sufficient consideration. It was then agreed that a small colony of eight religious should set out. They passed the monasteries of Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles, pushing on to Rome, where they received the blessing of Pius IX. But when they saw Loretto great was their dismay; the house was propped up; the refectory and community rooms were underground; the garden was barren; in spite of which they settled down without foreseeing all they would suffer from the climate, ignorance of the language, poverty, threats of fire, pillage, death; during the

night showers of stones were thrown at the house, and calumnies were the cause of the imprisonment at Ancona of the superior, the sister deposed, and a sister tourière. The recital of all these sufferings cannot find place in this short notice, which we desire to abridge as much as possible.

We must be satisfied only to mention the other monasteries: Bilbao, in Spain; Waterlooville, in England; Buffalo, Alleghany, Green-Bay, in the United States; Ottawa, Toronto, and New-Westminster, in Canada.

CHAPTER III

VENERABLE MOTHER MARY OF SAINT EUPHRASIA PELLETIER, AND OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF ANGERS

1. THE RELIGIOUS

M. PELLETIER, a physician, whose religious ideas and good works were suspected at Soullans, in La Vendée, left that town in 1791 with his wife and children to take refuge in the island of Noirmoutier. There was born, in 1796, Rose Virginie, whom the Church has now declared Venerable, under the name of Mary of Euphrasia Pelletier, foundress of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in the diocese of Angers. Born in a holy soil which had been bedewed with the blood of martyrs, and of Christian parents who did not fear to hazard their security by concealing priests, Rose Virginie was distinguished from her earliest years by her love for all things connected with religion, her devotion to St. Philibert, patron of Noirmoutier, her catechetical knowledge for which she was signally rewarded, and by her veneration for the old curé who had returned from exile after the Revolution.

The cross was the portion of this predestined child. When she was thirteen years of age her father died ; at fifteen she was separated from her mother, who sent her to one of her friends, Mme. Chobelet, the mistress of an institution at Tours ; at seventeen her mother's death took place, and for many years afterwards she was inconsolable. Happily a young mistress, Mlle. de Lignac, who was afterwards superior of the Ursulines, and to whom she was much devoted, sustained her courage. At eighteen years of age Rose Virginie longed to give herself wholly to God in a neighbouring convent, that of Our Lady of Charity. Like the priest, to labour for the salvation of souls captivated Rose Virginie, who was of a lively and exuberant nature. One of her mistresses once said to her that she was capable of being either an angel or a demon. 'I,' answered the child, 'I shall be a nun.'

She entered the convent on the 20th October 1814, but had to wait a year for the consent of her guardian. On the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, 1815, she received the white habit, symbol of purity, with the name Mary of Saint Euphrasia.

She immediately understood that the germ of the religious life is sown during the novitiate. Already prepared by Mlle. de Lignac, she applied herself with all the ardour of her nature to the exercises of the community, and to strict fidelity to her rules.

The reading of the Holy Scriptures, which she

loved, became so familiar to her, that one of her directors wrote to her some years later, that, to his shame, he confessed she was more acquainted with the Holy Scriptures than he was.

The life and works of St. Teresa were also dear to her; but still more the study of the rules and constitutions revised by P. Eudes. She once told her novices, in speaking to them, that since her entrance into religion, she had been so avaricious to know the origin of the Order and all that concerned it, that, when a novice at Tours, after the Sacred Scripture, her delight was to read the manuscript lives of some of the first Mothers, the letters of P. Eudes, the sketch of the history of his life, which at that time was not yet printed.

Finally, on the 9th September 1817, she solemnly pronounced her vows, to be faithful to them for ever, and to practise more perfectly the religious virtues. Poverty was henceforth her daily companion; it followed her everywhere. 'Order and neatness,' she was wont to say, 'enter into the practice of poverty.' Mother St. Euphrasia had such a horror of all that could sully her soul, that, when she became mistress of the penitents, she lived in ignorance of the disorders she was to remedy. It sufficed her to know she was to make war against sin.

Notwithstanding her affectionate and communicative nature, she always succeeded in excluding familiarity, in avoiding particular affection, and in

guarding her senses in a perfect restraint. From the beginning of her noviceship, her great attraction for obedience urged her to ask permission to pronounce the vow privately some time before her profession. This request was granted, and in order not to do away with it during her superiority, she engaged herself in the same manner, to accept without observation, all the decisions of her confessor, and to do nothing of importance without consulting him.

In obedience she found peace of soul, and understood these words of St. Jerome: 'Obedience is the epitome of every virtue and leads us straight to our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.'

She had not less respect for the fourth vow added by P. Eudes; that of labouring for the conversion of souls. 'This vow,' mother St. Euphrasia was wont to say to her daughters, 'constitutes the essence of our vocation. It is this vow which imparts the zeal that would carry us to distant shores, in order to win souls to God.' And again; 'I feel myself consumed with zeal when I meditate on our vocation, finding in it most resemblance to missionary labour. I sometimes fancy I hear the pitiful voices of little savages calling to me, Mother: Mother, come and save us.'

At the present time we read on the walls of the convent of Chicago these words of the Venerable Mother: 'My daughters, love the penitents, particularly the abandoned. Be charitable to them,

for without charity all is useless. If you abandon them for other works, you shall not have the grace and blessings of God.'

Faithful to the teaching of P. Eudes, of whom she ever styled herself his humble daughter, Mother St. Euphrasia refused the Bishop and benefactors of Metz, Sens, Port Said, apparently much more desirable foundations, in order to bring her work, the salvation of souls, more prominently before everyone. The sublime devotedness this work exacts, Mother St. Euphrasia found in her spirit of faith, in her meditations, in her Communions, in all her visits to the Blessed Sacrament. 'My dear daughters,' she would say, 'have a great ardour, a great zeal for the salvation of souls, for where will you find the grace necessary to carry on your vocation, if not from the Source itself?'

Even in the midst of her numerous occupations she never lost sight of the Presence of God.

It was from this interior life, this union with God, that she imbibed that peace of mind, that consolation, that joy and strength to fulfil the duties of her vocation. 'Where,' she was wont to say, 'shall we find the strength to give to our works the necessary solidity? We shall find it at the foot of the altar; during the quiet of meditation beseeching our Lord to grant it. The Mistresses of the classes particularly ought to have frequent recourse to this source. We have sometimes anxious moments to pass through. It is from our Lord in the Blessed

Sacrament, from the Blessed Virgin, from St. Joseph that we ought to seek the courage and zeal we require for the conquest of souls.'

Neither for travelling nor for any other cause would Mother St. Euphrasia omit Holy Communion, which was her whole strength, and in which she familiarly entertained herself with her Creator. 'God inspired me at Holy Communion to act thus,' she would say, and again, 'I shall speak on this matter to our Lord during my thanksgiving.'

She was often noticed to kneel immovable for many long hours before the Blessed Sacrament when she had any important decision on hand. 'God,' she was wont to say, 'is so jealous of His own glory that He will not allow men to undertake it without referring it exclusively to Him.'

But if she had little confidence in men, it was far different with regard to the Blessed Virgin, in whose aid she had implicit confidence. One day during a time of distress and famine she wrote to one of her daughters: 'I am going to the Blessed Virgin, she alone can understand and console me. I love her so intensely that I could die for Her.' In St. Joseph she also had unbounded confidence; she also installed him superior of the house of Angers. In this house, the altars, the statues that are met with at every step in honour of Our Lady, St. Joseph, St. Philomena, St. Germaine Cousin, St. Victor whose remains had been sent from Rome, show forth Mother Euphrasia's confidence in their intercession, and that she con-

sidered them her best advisers and strongest supports.

From this spirit of faith flowed her love for our holy Mother, the Church, her respect for the Supreme Pontiff and for the Bishops. Few days in her life gave her so much joy as on those when she knelt at the feet of Gregory XVI. When the Revolution sent Pius IX. into exile and deprived him of his estates, Mother St. Euphrasia publicly offered prayers for him, and notwithstanding the poverty of her institute offered him a sum of 3,000 francs. Her last words on her bed of sufferings were: 'I declare that I die a child of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church.

II. THE SUPERIOR OF ANGERS.

A short time after having pronounced her vows, Mother Euphrasia was charged with the penitents, and fulfilled this difficult post with so much zeal and success that in 1825, when scarcely twenty-nine years of age she was elected superior of the Refuge. Frightened at such a charge but full of confidence in God, she resolutely devoted herself to the work.

Many times among the penitents she had met with predestined souls, who, having sincerely returned to God desired to lead a life of sanctity. It was then the thought struck her of separating them under the name of Magdalens, of dressing them in a coarse habit and scapular like that of the Carmelites, under the direction of their former mistresses, of subject-

ing them to a life of prayer and mortification, and of giving them the permission to take the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. This appeared to have received the approval of Heaven.

The Monastery of Tours began to enjoy an unknown prosperity, when in 1829 Mgr. Montault requested the foundation of a refuge in his town of Angers. The curé of the Cathedral, M. Breton, a zealous confessor of the faith, repaired to Tours and had the happiness of bringing back Mother St. Euphrasia and Mother St. Victor. At the gates of Angers the old priest, getting down from the carriage, said to them: 'What! you desire to imitate the Apostles and you enter Angers in a carriage!' With his umbrella in his hand he immediately stepped out, and proud of his conquest walked through the town, followed by the two sisters, whom he conducted to the Bishop's Palace. The next day, Sunday, he presented them to the faithful. 'My brethren,' said he, 'we have here two nuns who have come to administer aid to soul and body. Let the blind, the lame, the paralysed come to them.' Great was the surprise of the sisters when they heard this invitation, but still greater was their embarrassment when, notwithstanding their protestations, they saw themselves surrounded by the decrepit, and infirm, whom it was impossible to get rid of.

An old mill and shed, known under the name of Tournemine, destined for their dwelling, was in a

lamentable condition. But Mother Euphrasia was enchanted to see the surrounding fields and gardens suitable for the extension of a monastery. She then returned to Tours to give an account of their journey; and four days later returned to Angers with five religious. The next day Mother Euphrasia conducted the sisters to the Bishop's Palace. She was then thirty-three years of age, not tall, her exterior distinguished and imposing, a countenance calm and full of kindness, a sweet and earnest expression. Mgr. Montault welcomed them with a goodness and benevolence which never diminished. M. Breton continued to quest for the new foundation with admirable zeal. Having heard one day that the officers of the garrison were assembled for a banquet, he presented himself before them. 'Friends,' he said, 'you have probably played many pranks during your life; I now propose to you a means of repairing them. At Angers a house destined to receive young girls who have been led astray is about to be founded. Will you contribute to the purchase of this house?' The officers though much surprised at such a proposal cried out 'bravo,' and at once gave up that day's pay.

As soon as they were settled in this convent, which they called the 'Good Shepherd,' the sisters set themselves to work, erected a small altar in a room, and put everything into order. Often they had nothing but bread to eat, and even this sometimes failed them. They thus patiently waited on

Divine Providence to send them some stray souls. Many had just arrived when Mother Euphrasia was recalled to Tours to conclude her second triennium of superiority. It was only in 1831, that freed from this charge, and recalled to the monastery of Angers, which had been greatly tried since her departure, she was officially named its Superior, and left with an unlimited obedience signed by her Bishop, to continue her charge as long as he deemed it necessary.

At the Convent of the Good Shepherd she immediately set about re-establishing perfect order, which revealed her rare talent for organisation. It was no easy task to arrange so many different categories of persons, who were obliged to live in close contact and union, and nevertheless to be distinct. For all these circumstances Mother Euphrasia had a prompt and easy conception, united to great uprightness of character. For the Religious, the Magdalens, Penitents, the Preservation class she procured distinct buildings capable of extension. She permitted each class to preserve its own identity, which urged on the children to work, accustomed them to earn their living, at the same time training the mistress and the pupils to order and economy. She herself was attentive to the smallest details of clothing or nourishment. Visits to the kitchen were frequent; and if sickness visited the community from time to time, certainly it was not owing to want of care or vigilance.

During the first months of the year 1835, the house was stricken by sickness and death; and in October of the same year there were twenty-five laid up in the infirmary at the same time, out of which six succumbed. But amidst these multiplied trials Mother Euphrasia remained calm and resigned; she even kept up the courage of her daughters by her brightness, and when they saw her looking more joyful than usual, those who knew her were accustomed to remark: 'Our Mother has met with another trial.' Her happiness lay in peace and joy for her daughters, whilst for her own portion she reserved the cross. 'Rejoice always, again I say to you rejoice, for the Lord is nigh,' she was wont to say with St. Paul. 'Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Ghost, which the wicked can never know. Worldlings are liable to imagine that religious must of necessity be unhappy, but you, my dear sisters, can bear testimony to the contrary.'

The affection of the sisters for their mother was so great, that her departure was the cause of immense grief, and her return brought an equal proportion of joy. Nothing could exceed the sweetness of her direction, whilst at the same time her firmness was not in the least diminished. The goodness, the affection of Mother Euphrasia was always followed by implicit and prompt obedience. On this subject we are told of a miracle of the obedience of St. Mary of St. Anselm, who died at

the age of twenty-six with such a reputation for sanctity, that the religious desired to preserve her heart. Her hands were so firmly clasped that the doctors found it impossible to remove them, in order to place them in the right position. Mother Euphrasia then spoke: 'My dear daughter, you have always been obedient; through obedience allow us to do what we wish.' As she spoke these words Sister Anselm at once obeyed. No person could resist the orders of so good a mother. Thus she could say in the latter years of her life: 'Here I have had no need to command, my desires were always forestalled.' This result was, undoubtedly, owing to the affection of her daughters, but still more to the example she gave of fidelity to her rule. She was its handmaid, was first at all the exercises, and believed that her being superior made exactitude more incumbent on her. We must also say that in her conversation she spoke with such earnestness of tone, with such a sweetness of voice, which at the same time did not lose its authority, that she carried conviction of her sentiments into the hearts of others, and this with all the more strength, as she herself never asked anything to be done by others, which beforehand she had not herself performed. Consistently could the mother say to her daughters: 'Take for your rule of conduct all you have seen practised in the mother-house, and never stray from it.' For a long time Mother Euphrasia was charged with the

direction of the novices, and even up to the last she reserved for herself the explanation of the rule. 'Our congregation,' she was wont to say, 'has two ends; to reform morals and to re-kindle faith in others. Our vocation is a vocation of zeal and an apostleship of charity. Let us remember that our whole life ought to be consecrated to the propagation of the faith and to the sanctification of souls.' To be watchful over the novices, by striving to develop their minds, to correct their faults of character, and even their exterior bearing, pre-occupied this good mother, who desired all her daughters to be perfect.

The Magdalens, whom she established as at Tours, were also the objects of her solicitude; she unceasingly sustained and encouraged them. She had also given them a rule capable of directing them to the highest sanctity.

As to the penitents: the interest Mother Euphrasia showed for their welfare, the influence she acquired over them by her affection, and the irresistible power of her words sufficed to maintain them in the way best suited for their salvation.

The Prefect of Maine-et-Loire, who came to visit the classes, was so struck by their appearance, that he immediately confided to the 'Good Shepherd' girls over fifteen years of age who had come out of prison. The celebrated orator, Odilon Barrot, after having visited the penitents in 1844, remarked: 'It is a community of religious that has been shown to

me; their countenances are so calm, their general bearing so modest and edifying.' Mother Euphrasia had from the first separated the old from the young, whom she placed in another quarter of the building, under the direction of St. Michael. She had also revised a rule and chosen a habit for penitents, who, not wishing to take upon themselves the obligations of the Magdalens, nevertheless desired to remain in their class and give edifying example. For this reason, they were permitted to pronounce a vow of fidelity and perseverance renewable at the end of each year, and they were of much use to the sisters.

It was thus by her activity, and we may say her genius for organisation, Mother Euphrasia provided for every requirement. Under such a wise government the house of Angers rapidly increased, and also God surrounded her with powerful benefactors. Firstly, M. de Neuville, who gave large sums of money for the foundation of the monastery and the construction of the church, and who testified for the Good Shepherd convent, even to old age, his religious attachment, and to which he devoted all the revenues of his land for its support and its development. His humility and his devotion to the Blessed Virgin were such that he was wont to say to the nuns: 'Do not thank me; I do not give it to you, I give it to the Blessed Virgin.' Mme. D'Andigné, who also belonged to a noble family of Anjou, from the first won the heart of Mother

Euphrasia by her piety and devotedness ; she never left her, and was the confidant of all her sorrows and consolations, accompanied her on all her journeys to Metz and Rome, paying all expenses, and overwhelming the community with her generous gifts. Mother Euphrasia—who said to her daughters: ‘Ingratitude is abominable! I dread it more than anything else,’—testified in every way her gratitude to the benefactors of the monastery and of the institute.

Under such skilful direction, and with such assistance, the extension of the monastery of Angers was extraordinary. Simple and airy buildings were soon erected for the community, the novitiate, the Magdalens, the Preservation class, to shelter more than a thousand persons. A very fine abbey, ‘Saint-Nicolas,’ built by the Benedictines in the eighteenth century, was purchased, connected with the convent by a tunnel, and at the death of Mother Euphrasia the monastery of Angers was probably, as it now is, the largest in the whole world.

Our venerable Mother referred all the glory to God ; from the Divine Architect she had obtained all the assistance she desired, for well she understood that ‘Unless the Lord build the house : they labour in vain that build it. Unless the Lord keep the city : he watcheth in vain that keepeth it.’—

Ps. cxxvi.

III. THE SUPERIOR GENERAL.

For a religious institute the generalate may offer light inconveniences, restrain the liberty of particular houses in the administration of their temporal goods, disinterest donors who desire to favour only one single house, and for a cloistered order occasion the too frequent departure of the superior general and of the members of the chapter.

But these inconveniencies are compensated for by great advantages. Differences which might arise cannot be happily settled without the supervision of the mother general, and also periodical elections no longer trouble the tranquillity of the house. Nothing more favourable than the generalate to preserve the smallest details and customs of an order. In France the Ursulines could not have numbered four principal branches if they had depended on a mother house, which keeps a watchful eye over the spirit which prevails in the convent. And as to the material consideration, the generalate often prevents the abuse of an inexperienced administration and facilitates new foundations.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, at the time of P. Eudes, Rome scarcely permitted religious to form a congregation, and even a bull of erection was, for this motive, refused to B. Pierre Fourrier, founder of the religious of Notre-Dame. It was probably on account of a consideration of this kind that St. François de Sales did not endeavour to give

a superior general to the Visitation. From that time V. P. Eudes, for whom the desires of the Holy See were as commands, would be very careful of any innovation under this head. But the change of morals and habits, the facility of communicating which now exists, having made Rome quit its former line of conduct, particularly with regard to institutes of women devoted to works of charity, Mother St. Euphrasia could aspire to extend her ardent zeal, and to give to the works of P. Eudes a catholicity and a perpetuity that the generalate alone can assure. In seeing what was so impracticable in the seventeenth century so easy in the nineteenth, in remarking that distances no longer exist, correspondence from distant countries so convenient, Mother St. Euphrasia asked herself why material progress, so largely extended for commerce and industry, should not be made use of for the salvation of souls. To withdraw the houses of the Good Shepherd from the necessary fluctuations of a local government to place them under that of the Holy See, to gather them all together lest they should become unfruitful, to preserve the bonds of charity and dependence between the mother and her daughters, in the house of Angers to found a flourishing novitiate which would provide subjects for all parts of the world; such was the dream cherished by Mother Euphrasia, approved of by her bishop, Mgr. Montault, and by many other holy persons. The vivid anticipation of all these asylums

sheltering thousands of repentant souls, had so seized and captivated her, that, one day in the year 1834, during the Magnificat, she could not restrain her tears, left the choir and immediately wrote to Cardinal Odescalchi whose name had been mentioned to her. Her letter ended by these words: 'I desire only the greater glory of God. If the Sovereign Pontiff and your Eminence find obstacles to the erection of a generalate, I most humbly submit.' This cardinal was one day to be the pillar of the institute. But let us listen to Mother Euphrasia speaking to her daughters in 1858: 'Some time after having written to the Cardinal-Vicar an extraordinary thing happened to me. One night as I awoke from an unusually calm sleep, I imagined I saw a prelate whom I did not know; he wore the dress of a cardinal, his person breathed sweetness and sanctity, his whole appearance commanded respect. He said to me; "Fear nothing, my daughter; your work shall be successful, God has chosen me to be its protector." After these words he disappeared and left me full of confidence and consolation. What was my surprise when at Rome some years later I recognised in His Eminence, Cardinal Odescalchi, the prelate who appeared to me.'

To realise this great enterprise, Mother Euphrasia was gifted with an upright view, an energy sweet though firm, to which no obstacle could be a barrier, for she said with the Apostle: 'I can do all things

in Him who strengthens me.' Happily she was seconded by her bishop, Mgr. Montault, and by many other holy religious. But on all sides opposition arose as Mother Euphrasia desired to subject all the houses of the Order; she was also opposed by Mgr. de Montblanc, bishop of Tours, the bishop of Mans, and many other prelates.

During all these trials Mother Euphrasia remained calm, and was able to write: 'I desire the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Let men judge as they please. How necessary it is to understand that the cross is inseparable from a work such as the generalate, which is bound to save so many souls!' Notwithstanding all these oppositions, the generalate was recognised by a brief of Gregory XVI. in 1835, defining the attributions of the Superior-general, of the Bishop and of the Cardinal charged with the protection, correction, and government of the congregation. We give a sketch of the way marked out by the Holy See with regard to the Good Shepherd: The Institute may be divided into provinces, in each of which there shall be a novitiate. The Superior-general and her council shall name the provincial superior and her councillors, the novice mistresses and the local superior. The sisters shall usually remain in the province where they have made their vows. The provincial superior cannot erect new houses without the authorisation of the Superior-general. They should visit their province at least every second

year, and render an account of their visit to the Superior-general. Mother Euphrasia, having received the decree from Rome, was transported with joy and hope. She said in writing to Metz: 'Now, my beloved sisters, let us be grateful to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. We will labour with new zeal for the salvation of so many poor souls who are abandoned. We will be asked for foundations on every side.' Her expectations were not disappointed. Ten years later the Order already numbered thirty-five houses in France as well as in distant lands, and in 1855 fifty-four foundations had already sprung up not only in France, but in Germany, Italy, Belgium, Ireland, Egypt, Austria, England, and in America. At this time Mother Euphrasia wrote to the Superior of Grenoble; 'Ah: if we were more holy what good would we not do! Again two new foundations; the generalate extends amidst crosses and troubles. How many souls will be saved by its means. But the first stone of the edifice will be held back by trouble and sorrow.'

Notwithstanding so many trials, her joy was very great when in 1838 a first house was established at Rome, and she heard from the lips of Gregory XVI. how much he admired the devotedness of her daughters. What happiness for her when she heard the bishop of Nantes, Mgr. de Hercé, the devoted friend of the Good Shepherd, preach to the novices in three different languages, and when in 1847 she

beheld him baptising ten negresses who had been purchased in Ethiopia.

Was it not the realisation of the desires manifested to her daughters when she said to them: 'Once on a journey to Rome, when we were going up a hill, we were obliged to get down from the diligence in order to lighten the weight. We met a shepherd guarding his flock which was composed of black and white sheep, and I said to myself, O shepherd, how happy you are to possess black and white sheep! I have many white ones, but I want the black also. These black sheep, my dear daughters, whom I have for years longed for, are poor negresses who have been stolen by barbarians, or those who have been sold by their wretched parents.' Was it not the fulfilment of her cherished hopes? 'My soul is filled with joy when I think that Ethiopians, and many of the idolatrous people shall here receive the white robe of baptism. Who knows if the Good Shepherd will not fix his abode on the borders of the Nile and among these uncivilised tribes.' Electrified by these words of Mother Euphrasia with the ardour of apostles, the sisters spoke of the most distant missions, happy to have been chosen in preference to so many of their companions. 'Daughters of obedience,' Mother Euphrasia would say to them, 'go to Africa, go through obedience, through obedience remain *thére*.' And the small colony departed. But the good Mother accompanied them by her

prayers, and by her maternal solicitude. A most affectionate letter awaited them at Toulon carrying this message; "Children of obedience, fly to the conquest of souls." When in 1843 sisters were preparing to go to Kentucky, Mother Euphrasia said to them; 'Before six weeks my dear daughters, you shall baptise and catechise poor savage children who shall be brought to you from afar. Come, the holy Bishop of Lunéville says to you, come, the work I offer you is worthy of your vocation. Consider your institute, my dear daughters, see, how it works in distant lands, where the harvest is ripe but the labourers few.'

In 1854, when sisters set out for the East Indies, Mother Euphrasia desired to accompany them to Paimbœuf and see them on the ship. At the time of parting our Mother was so grieved that spectators remarked: 'Never could we realise that a superior could love her religious so much, and be so loved by them; this community is a family. In truth it is a real family. Never did a superior find a truer echo in the hearts of her daughters whom she followed everywhere, and with whom she lived in spirit in the most distant countries, interesting herself in the smallest details. 'Are you turned out?' she wrote in 1837 to a superior of Puy, 'How many poor sheep have you? Tell them how much we desire their well-being. How is your saintly Bishop going on?' At the end of a long letter in the same year to the sisters of Rheims, she added;

‘How it pains me to write so little to you, my dear Sisters, Mary of St. Louis and St. Timothée, who, by your consoling letters have given me such great joy. But when at your house I shall write to you at length.’ She even feared to cause pain by involuntary delays. ‘Await the Lord with patience,’ she wrote in 1843 to the superior of Turin, ‘oh! how much we need patience my dear daughter. How sorry I am for your sake to have been ill, you have had to wait, you, the most devoted of all my daughters.’ All her letters breathe the same abandonment, the same simplicity, the same maternal tenderness.

But it was not solely by her correspondence Mother Euphrasia encouraged her children, she frequently visited them, but this always caused her great fatigue. Always ailing, particularly when travelling, she travelled through the north of France often passing days and nights in comfortless conveyances at the risk of many accidents. In 1842 she set out for Angoulême, and the public car was so crowded that it overturned. After half an hour’s delay assistance came to the travellers. Mother Euphrasia did not complain, but during her latter days she acknowledged that the pain in her side from which she suffered she then felt for the first time. When in 1843 she learned that her daughters at Poitiers were threatened with imprisonment, she immediately set out to visit them, passing two days travelling. During a rigorous

winter the sisters of Perpignan could not pay their debts, the Reverend Mother immediately set out with some assistance. For some time her way was blocked up by the snow, but notwithstanding she sustained the courage of her companions. She neither feared dangers nor fatigues when the interest of the institute was at stake. Her zeal was the same in regard to anticipated foundations; she went to Angoulême and even to Mons in Belgium, she travelled to Munich and journeyed twice to Rome, on her return visiting the houses of Turin, Genoa, and Nice. When the cholera broke out in Cairo, she sustained her daughters and congratulated them on their devotedness; when, in 1848 the houses of Bourg, Macon, Genoa, and Dôle were pillaged and the sisters dispersed, she revived their drooping courage; when the cholera was raging in the monastery of Bourges in 1854, she immediately chose, though not without exciting envy, ten among the seniors of the community to go to the aid of the plague-stricken. Always and everywhere our good Mother, by her letters, her visits, by every kind of assistance stimulated the courage of her sisters and inflamed their zeal for the salvation of souls. When we examine the work accomplished by Mother Euphrasia, we naturally wonder how she was able to found, govern, develop the monastery of Angers, numerous foundations throughout the entire world, and get through so many journeyings and correspondence. It is a problem

which humanly speaking we cannot solve. It is true she devoted her life, her strength, her natural talents to plant and to water, but she counted on God alone to give the increase. In His hands she was but a docile instrument to give to the Institutes of V. P. Eudes a development and a fecundity which must overjoy its holy Founder. 'To-morrow, my dear sisters,' she said one day, 'we shall commemorate our holy Founder. I remember at the beginning of this loved foundation of Angers, I was troubled about the Will of God. P. Suchet, my confessor, said to me: "But, my dear child, the extension of your order greatly rejoices Père Eudes; for he looks down with joy on all the new foundations, on all the souls which will be saved. We have only to read the wishes of our holy Founder, my dear daughters, to see that he ardently desired innumerable souls to be saved, and remark what he says: that we ought to people the earth; his intention was then that we should extend everywhere.' For such a sublime undertaking God gave to Mother Euphrasia the knowledge of the requirements of her time, animated her with an apostolic zeal, and blessed her efforts. 'When she slept in the Lord, on the 24th April 1868, says the decree relative to the cause of her beatification, she bequeathed as an inheritance one hundred and ten houses, and almost nineteen thousand children, in the mother house and in all the other houses of the congregation of the Good Shepherd.'

The same sap circulates in this gigantic tree whose branches have continued to extend since the death of the venerable Mother. Under her two successors Marie de Saint-Pierre and Marie de Sainte-Marine the number of monasteries have more than doubled. We give a letter relative to this subject of Mgr. Rameau, bishop of Angers, to the Reverend Mother of Sainte-Marine in November 1899: 'During these latter times your Institute has been the object of attacks which have been published in France and other countries. You and your daughters have drained the cup of bitterness, and the friends of religion have grieved with you whilst its enemies loudly rejoiced. Continue, Reverend Mother, your sublime mission under the eye of God, the sovereignly equitable judge of our intentions, and the infinitely merciful remunerator of the things we accomplish for His love. If some detractors give rise to misconstruction, remember that the disciple is not above his master, and that it is a privilege of the works of God to be a sign of contradiction, it is even a pledge of the blessings He reserves. Providence has largely accorded you these blessings even up to the present day. Your holy Institute only numbers seventy years of existence, and already it has cast in its seed in the four quarters of the globe. Nearly 7,000 religious compose your immense family; they are spread among 221 houses; 100 in Europe, 92 in America, 6 in Asia, 6 in Africa, 6 in Australia. You exercise almost

all kinds of apostolic labour, and benefit at the present time 47,385 children or young girls, who, without you would be a heavy burden on society. Such numbers are in my humble opinion, the most eloquent panegyric of the wonders which God has wrought for you, and of those He deigns to accomplish through you. Ah! if it so please God, that the wind of persecution come upon you from all sides, and force you to turn out on the streets the 47,000 waifs sheltered by your charity, it would be dreadful to think, even apart from the thought of religion, of the disorder, the demoralisation, which would be its result outside your convent. No, this will not happen; on the contrary the day will come, when the indifferent, the sceptic, the impious, convinced by evidence, shall respect your gifts, rival with the friends of religion in admiring your heroism, and this shall be a new sign of the blessings of God. Courage and confidence! May the fecundity of the past be to you as a pledge of the future!’

CHAPTER IV

MIRACLES AND CAUSE OF THE BEATIFICATION OF THE V. P. EUDES

WE here renew the protestation of not qualifying the following facts: judgment does not belong to us. Also we will not undertake the recital of the numerous and extraordinary cures obtained through the intercession of V. P. Eudes, this would fill many volumes. Interesting details have been given in the annals of the Institutes of the Eudists, in the work published by R. P. Le Doré, and entitled *Vertus du P. Eudes*, and also in the *Revue du Saint Cœur de Marie*.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites is in possession of the facts of three cures wrought in Brittany, two of them at Rennes in 1874, and the third at Hennebont in 1883. We will limit ourselves to a sketch of the information taken regarding two of them.

JEANNE-FRANÇOISE CHASSÉ

In 1870 there lived in the convent of Saint-Cyr, at Rennes, Jeanne-Françoise Chassé, in religion Sœur Marie-Augustine, born at Thorigné, in the

diocese of Rennes, aged thirty-seven years. She had lived in the convent for about sixteen years, and had always appeared to be healthy, when she was attacked by a disease of the skin followed soon after by great internal pain. It became necessary to change her employment and give her less laborious duties. Notwithstanding these precautions the malady increased during the space of two years, vomiting became more frequent, the very lightest food, even milk, was sufficient to bring on an attack. The invalid was obliged to pass whole days without touching anything, continually suffering excruciating pains, deprived of sleep, and losing all her strength. Her colour became jaundiced, and all gave evidence to the near approach of death. Crises were continually renewed. 'I have witnessed heartrending scenes,' the Superior says; 'contortions, and the Sister repeated, "I can no longer have any control over myself." She perpetually suffered from continual fever.' The doctor said it was a tumorous cancer in the left side. Some time before the cure the nights were frightful, the pains in the back and sides greater, the breathing more laboured. The infirmarians daily expected the death of this suffering sister. It was also the opinion of the doctor, who one day remarked: 'Since P. Eudes has already cured one among you, you may once again pray to him for this one; if it is obtained it shall assuredly be a miracle of the first order.'

At the moment of a crisis the Superior said to

Sr. Marie - Augustine: 'Sister, you will make a novena to P. Eudes.' 'Mother,' was the answer, 'I am too ill; it would be useless; I do not believe that P. Eudes can cure me.' 'You will tell him,' the Superior continued, 'that I command you to ask for your cure.' Finally a novena was begun on Monday, the 2nd March. All the religious of the community joined in it, and recited daily, three times, a Pater, Ave Maria, and Gloria Patri, an invocation to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and three times 'Venerable Père Eudes, pray for us.' However, the suffering continued, and on the 9th March, the illness increasing, the doctor forewarned us to watch the sister so that she might not die without receiving the last Sacraments. The novena was to be finished on the 10th March, the day on which the exercises preparatory for the feast of St. Joseph were begun. There was a sermon followed by Benediction. Our invalid made an effort to be present in order to finish the novena. But before the end of the ceremony she was obliged to leave the church and go to the 'avant chœur,' where she knelt down before a relic of V. P. Eudes. She had scarcely done so when the pains suddenly ceased; she even remained kneeling without fatigue during the Benediction. It was the time of great silence; she did not wish to infringe the rule, but went to the infirmary, took a drink of milk, and to the astonishment of the sisters present ate other food like a person in good health, went to bed and slept profoundly. The

next morning Sr. Marie-Augustine went to find the Superior, and said to her: 'Mother, I am suffering no longer, and I can no longer feel the swelling.' 'Say nothing,' answered the Superior, 'until the doctor comes, we will make a novena in thanksgiving.'

The doctor, greatly surprised, declared it to be a complete cure, and allowed the sister to return to the most laborious duties. When at the end of the year 1875, by order of the Archbishop of Rennes, canonical information was taken, Doctor Régnault affirmed that since the cure Sr. Marie Augustine had always been in good health; Doctor Petit testified that her health was truly satisfactory; and Doctor Philouze that her state left nothing to be desired. Blessed then be the V. P. Eudes!

LOUIS BOURDON

On the 13th September 1869, in a family named Bourdon, who lived at Janzé, in the diocese of Rennes, was born a child who received the name of Louis-Marie-Joseph at baptism. When he was four years old he lost his father who was only thirty-three years of age, and when he was eight years old, his mother died in her thirty-fourth year. The young orphan then found a home with his guardian, who was one of his uncles and a shoemaker at Janzé. The Christian education he received, the care with which he was surrounded by the priests of this parish, inspired him with the

desire of becoming a priest. Remarkable for his piety, his intelligence, his gentleness, he was adopted as a pupil by one of the vicars, M. l'abbé Pannetier.

Owing to the good recommendations of this ecclesiastic, in the month of September 1882, young Louis entered the apostolic school of Saint-Louis at Plancoët, of which we have already spoken. In a few weeks he won the esteem and affection of his masters and companions, was happy in his new home, and was making rapid progress in his studies when it pleased God to send him a terrible trial.

The 23rd May 1883, we went into a garden to gather ivy and boxwood for the feast of Corpus Christi. After we had finished, some of our children amused themselves by erecting small altars with branches and flowers at the foot of the trees; some were playing about, and others were trying to knock down chestnuts. Suddenly Louis Bourdon was struck in the right eye, and inflammation set in. 'Returning to Plancoët,' Louis Megret, one of his companions, tells us, 'two of us were obliged to support him. On the way he complained of feeling giddy, and not being able to see. Now and then he would rest his head on either of our shoulders.'

When we had arrived home his eyes were bathed and bandaged, then the child was laid down in bed. The following days and nights Louis continued to

suffer, and was deprived of the sight of the eye. We tried every means of bringing down the inflammation, but eight days passed without any improvement, notwithstanding the suspension of studies and complete rest. Then the doctor advised us to take him to an oculist in Dinan. We did so; and the eye was discovered to be infused with blood. The continuation of the same remedies was prescribed at this first visit, as well as at the second which took place fifteen days later. A month passed by and there was no better result; young Louis had even to make use of a companion in order to write to his family. 'You ought to bring him to Dinard,' a friend at Plancoët remarked to me, 'you will there find a distinguished oculist of Saint-Brieuc, M. du Gourlay, and it is to his skill I myself owe the preservation of my sight.'

On Tuesday, the 26th June, I therefore brought Louis to Dinard. The eye was carefully examined with different instruments. The oculist looked very grave and showed signs of dissatisfaction. 'The left eye does not pain you?' asked M. du Gourlay. 'No, Monsieur,' answered the child, 'but I had in it an infusion of blood last year, and since then it has not been so healthy as the other one.' 'It is unfortunate,' continued the oculist, 'that it should not be the left eye.' 'But,' I then exclaimed, 'is the sight of the right eye gone?' 'Yes, in this part of the eye (*macula lutea*) there is a serious hurt, and all affection in this sensible part entails the

loss of sight. There is no hope for the sight of this eye; but we must have a careful watch over the other, probably it may be affected in the same way. All intellectual work must cease, and if irritation and prickling attack the other eye, there is only one remedy that can avert a serious malady.'

At these last words the doctor looked at me to see if I understood. Alas! I understood only too well, and even now it makes me sad to think of it. A strong reflecting lamp stood on a table in the darkened room. The doctor took it up in one hand, the boy's hat in the other, then making him close the left eye he alternately placed the lamp and the hat before the right eye. 'Do you see anything?' he asked. 'No' was the answer. 'Can you distinguish any difference?' 'No' was again the answer. This was done two or three times, and a gesture of impatience shown by the doctor made me realise the gravity of the case. I left full of disappointment and trying to hide my emotion. I was thinking of the whole affair but feared to address Louis. Did he know that he was threatened with total blindness? Had he understood that probably the left eye would have to be taken out? Must he be told that his studies should be totally abandoned? After such an unforeseen and bitter sentence, the present was sad and the future still more so.

Our return to Plancoët greatly concerned the fathers. We contented ourselves with telling the

children to pray, as the case was serious. The whole truth had been made known to the family, and we requested that Louis should be taken home, and at once taken to an oculist at Rennes.

Before the departure of Louis I desired to prepare him; told him that the remedies would not cure him, and that, fearing a greater trial, he should give up all study. 'And,' I asked, 'what will you do? Have you thought about it?' 'Yes, Father,' Louis answered, 'I would like to be a lay-brother. I desire to remain a child of Père Eudes; ask the Reverend Father General to keep me.' I promised, and on the 30th June Louis left for Janzé.

We did not forget him, and on the 2nd July Père Brunel asked the Reverend Father General's permission to send the invalid to Lourdes. For many reasons this permission was not given; no doubt it was overruled by an all-wise Providence who willed that the miracle should be performed in another way.

Louis, who was always suffering and slept but little, was taken by M. l'abbé Pannetier to a celebrated oculist at Rennes, M. Cuisnier. 'The case was considered very serious,' M. Pannetier tells us. 'The doctor said that galvanism might be tried as a last resource, but that having uselessly tried it many times, he advised me not to have recourse to it. At my request he once more examined the child. He closed the left eye, placed Louis in front of a window and asked him where

the light came from. Louis could not answer, and the doctor considered it useless, in presence of such insensibility, to have recourse to the electric battery upon which I had insisted.' After this consultation, M. Pannetier wrote to us, that M. Cuisnier did not think the left eye would be attacked. This news gave us some hope for the future; a reassuring word from good authority is much prized in such a case.

Louis returned to the 'Juvénat' on the 31st July, and accompanied his companions to the sea, where he remained for twelve days. He took walks with them morning and evening on the strand, and slept in granaries on straw, but abstained from all reading and bathing. Nevertheless, the state of the eyes was not less serious; and on the 14th August Louis wrote to his family: 'I am writing to you, and though it is a short letter, I cannot write it all at once. The eye which can see pains me and is very easily tired.'

The vacation coming to an end, Louis understood that he was incapable of continuing his studies, and that, profiting by the permission given him by the Reverend Father General, he should enter the novitiate as a lay-brother. The sacrifice was great; to leave his companions and take up an inferior and fatiguing position, renounce the grand and holy career he had looked for. 'My poor child,' I said to him, 'you are leaving us, but we shall meet again; we shall always belong to the same family, and

among the novices at Hennebont you will meet with warm sympathy and fraternal affection. Courageously accept your cross, and ask from God the grace to carry it bravely.' Louis set out for Hennebont (Morbihan) on the 19th August, sad but resigned. When leaving, he gave a special remembrance to him who had been the innocent cause of the injury.

The orphan met with a warm reception in the novitiate, and was remarked for his humility, sweetness, and obedience. But he soon experienced the change of position; the privation of the recreations he was accustomed to with his companions was painful; manual labour in silence and solitude was trying, and though he had lost all hope of being cured, and had no fortune or career open for him, he was tempted to leave the novitiate, and spoke to his family.

He continued to suffer from his eyes, the pain becoming even more incessant and more trying. Often during the night he would rise to cool his head under a pump. He received the name of Brother Cyprian, and his employment consisted in taking care of the refectories, sweeping the stairs, and preparing the lamps. 'It often happened to me,' said Louis before the episcopal commission of inquiry, 'to pour the oil outside the lamps, or to fill them too much. I could not see the cobwebs on the corridors, and the Superior had to employ a novice to supply my place at this work.'

The doctor of the house prescribed a potion, but without effect. This progressive diminution of sight was going on in the left eye, when, on Saturday evening, the 15th December, as he was drawing water, the pain became intolerable. Brother Cyprian going to the kitchen, begged the brother to look at his eyes, and remained sitting at the fireside for about half an hour. When he stood up he was blind. The next morning one of the Fathers entered the church holding Louis by the hand. Immediately every one knew what had happened. To see an orphan of fourteen years of age, of no ordinary piety and intelligence, deprived of his sight, his projects for the future frustrated, was it not an overwhelming trial?

A young oculist, M. Sauvage, whose success had rendered him celebrated, at that time used to come twice a week from Lorient to Hennebont to spend some hours with his mother. Brother Cyprian was brought to him on Tuesday, the 18th December. After having examined the eyes with the aid of special instruments, the doctor said to the superior of the novitiate, 'The wounded eye is lost; I will try, by a prolonged treatment, to do something for the other one. I can hope for little, and even that will be tedious.'

The next day a letter from the Reverend Père Cochet, superior of the novitiate, was an unexpected blow to us. 'Louis Bourdon is blind. The doctor has just told me there is no hope for a complete

cure. On this evening we will begin a novena to Venerable Père Eudes, in which we ask you all to unite.

The foreboding of M. du Gourlay, which the reassuring words of M. Cuisnier had made us forget, was now realised. The same day we began the novena, and during this time we received two letters, telling us of no amelioration. Having no longer hope from the science of men, and not presuming to expect so great a favour from Heaven, we were considering what in the future we might do in regard to Louis. P. Brunel wrote to one of his sisters, foundress of an establishment for young persons afflicted with blindness, asking the conditions for entering. The answer was made known to the Reverend Père Cochet and to M. l'abbé Pannetier.

The first of these conditions was that blindness should be total before admission to this asylum, and in the case of young Louis this was perfectly fulfilled. I give the juridical deposition of a former novice, M. l'abbé Cassard. 'I had the happiness to be engaged with this interesting case, which the Rev. Père Cochet confided to me. Morning and evening I went to his room and placed my lighted lamp before his face, but, no matter how strong the light was, it produced no sensation on the eyes. He could not take a single step without the support of a wall. "Where are we?" I often asked him, after having walked some time in the garden. Then

he would stop, grope around him, and answer, "I do not know," or he would name some other part of the garden.' The depositions of many other witnesses relate a number of similar facts: Louis walking straight towards a lighted lamp placed before his eyes, striking against it if he was not stopped; in the morning groping about his bed for his clothes; not stopping when the passage was blocked; leaving a lamp lighted in his cell without perceiving it until ten o'clock in the morning.

According to the avowal of all the novices he was truly and really blind. The novitiate was greatly concerned, and the boy also understood the gravity of his state. But we will allow M. l'abbé Cassard to speak: 'Before the opening of the novena, young Brother Cyprian was downcast, it was difficult to divert him. One day I led him into the greenhouse, and read to him the miraculous apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Pontmain. Suddenly interrupting the reading, I raised my eyes and saw that he was crying. His tears touched me, I took hold of his hand, and told him how much I sympathised with him. "Thank you," he answered, "you always come for me at recreation; I shall ask the Reverend Père Cochet to allow you to assist me." At that moment a novice came up to us, and having told us that a novena to Venerable Père Eudes was about to begin, Brother Cyprian appeared happy, and from that time his brightness never left him.

‘Thursday, the 20th December, I was deputed to take Brother Cyprian to the oculist. Taking him by the hand, we proceeded to Hennebont; and in passing through the town the inhabitants would murmur: “Poor child! is it not very sad?” There were many waiting their turn at M. Sauvage’s. “Do you see anything? Can you perceive any difference between the day and the night?” “No,” was the invariable answer. “Can you distinguish anything now?” the doctor added, placing a lamp before his eyes. “No, Monsieur,” again was the answer. I was greatly grieved, I went into the garden while the doctor was treating him, which lasted nearly three quarters of an hour.

‘Many times he told me his impression, and explained the disease to me in scientific terms which I did not understand. “What disheartens me,” he added, “is, that I have dropped some very strong water into the eye, and he feels nothing. To-morrow I leave for Paris, and I shall submit the case to one of my old professors, and we shall see if it is possible to do something for the left eye of this boy; return in eight days. He then prescribed a recipe. On returning Brother Cyprian said to me: “Doctors and remedies certainly won’t cure me; all the oculists have said that I shall not be cured, the V. P. Eudes will cure me.”’

This confidence in P. Eudes, whose medal he carried round his neck, did not abandon him and, according to many, increased towards the end of the

novena. He also gave up the oculist's remedies. A novice asking him one day what he would do if he remained blind, he answered: 'Why do you disturb me? I am sure that V. P. Eudes will not permit it.' And to Père de Saint-Jouan who was leading him to his cell, he remarked: 'I was much surprised at not having been cured to-day, as I thought the novena ended this evening; but a novice tells me it will not end until to-morrow; and to-morrow I shall be cured, and shall announce the good news to my parents and to the fathers at Plancoët.' The novena was begun on Tuesday evening, the 18th December, by the litanies of Père Eudes, and on the morning of the 19th by two Communion. The last litanies were to be recited on the evening of the 26th, and the two last Communion made on the morning of the 27th. By a happy coincidence, which was remarked only a few days before, the novena ended on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, feast of the Venerable John Eudes. On Thursday morning Louis was brought to a small oratory which was in the house, in order to assist at the Mass which Père de Saint Jouan was celebrating for him, and to receive Holy Communion. At this time the pains in the eyes greatly increased. 'It would seem,' Louis tells us, 'as if the nerves became unstrung, and these violent sufferings lasted during the whole of the Mass and my thanksgiving, until the server of the second Mass recited the Confiteor for communion. Then the pain suddenly ceased; I felt a commotion which made me open my

eyelids, which were habitually closed since I became wholly blind. I immediately perceived, some distance before me, the portrait of V. P. Eudes hanging on the wall. I looked upon it for some time, then I tried if I could see it with each eye, now closing one and then the other. I could see equally well with both eyes. An old brother, Brother Marie, was kneeling beside me. I tapped him on the shoulder saying: "Brother, I see."

The Brother's surprise and emotion can be better understood than expressed. 'Kneeling in the same bench with me,' says the Brother, 'Louis piously assisted at Holy Mass. He received Holy Communion in his place, and spent a long time in thanksgiving. Suddenly he seized me by the right arm saying to me in a low tone of voice, "Brother, I see." "You see?" I exclaimed. "Yes, that is a picture of Père Eudes straight before me."

'I said a prayer in thanksgiving. Then he said to me, "Will you come? I will bring you. I see." He opened the door of the oratory, opened and closed the door of my room, took a chair and sat near the fire. "I am cured," he continued, "I see perfectly well with both eyes." Brother Marie asked what was on the table. "A small picture of Père Eudes," was the answer; then we both recited together the *Te Deum*.' During this time, the novices who did not know what had just occurred were assisting at the High Mass. When it was over the Rev. Father Superior told M. Cassard to break-

fast promptly in order to bring Brother Cyprian to the oculist. 'Instead of going to the refectory,' M. Cassard tells us, 'I went to my room for my hat, and then went to Louis's cell.' Surprised at not finding him I went down to the kitchen, but he was not there; Brother Marie told me he was at Mass. I went to the novitiate, the boy was not there. Disconcerted, I hesitated for a moment, went towards Brother Marie's room to tell him of my embarrassment, there I found Louis Bourdon. He looked at me. "You have been playing pranks on me," I said to him, "I have searched the house for you; come quickly." "Where to?" demanded Louis. "To Henebont"—"For what purpose?" "To see the oculist." "To see the oculist," he repeated laughingly, "it is useless; I can see quite well now." I was dumbfounded; I took up a picture from the table; "What is this?" I asked. "A picture of Père Eudes," was the answer. Opening a book, I presented it to him; he read some lines, and that without any hesitation. Then I seized the boy by the hand, with the intention of bringing him to the Superior's room, but in the middle of the corridor he escaped from me, and outstripped me by running on.'

'The Reverend Père Cochet had the Latin text of the Bible before him; he made Louis read some verses, and declared the cure of both eyes perfect. The event was soon known among the novices; and the house of silence and retreat was changed into that of intense happiness; no one could stay quiet;

all the rooms were empty; every one longed to see Brother Cyprian; and in every quarter one heard the words: "He sees! He is cured! A miracle!"

'Immediately the Reverend Father Superior left with Louis for Hennebont, where they waited at the station for M. Sauvage, who was coming from Paris. The doctor was astonished at the complete and sudden cure, and getting down from the train, where he had spent the night, he put off the examination of the eyes until later.

At Plancoët the surprise and joy was very great; particularly when the following letter, written by the boy himself, was received:

"REVEREND FATHER,—God having given me back my sight through the intercession of V. P. Eudes, inspires me with the desire of making the first use of it to offer my best wishes for the new year; and I fulfil this duty with immense pleasure. Yes, I assure you, it is with the greatest happiness I offer my best wishes to all the Fathers of Saint Louis. Your grateful pupil,—L. B.

"Vive le Père Eudes!"

'This short letter, perfectly written, confirmed for us the authenticity of this cure. At Plancoët, as well as at Hennebont, thanksgivings were offered up to God and to His Venerable Servant.

'I will conclude by a remark which has struck me; and it is this, that Providence has been pleased to multiply the proofs of the certainty of the disease, as well as those of the reality of the cure. Louis,

on account of many reasons, or rather by the dispensation of the Divine Will, during his illness and since that time, passed a notable time at Plancoët, Janzé, and Hennebont; he was scrupulously examined both before and after the cure by renowned specialists, and by the most skilful oculists of Saint-Brieuc, Rennes, and Lorient.

‘I cannot here give their reports and certificates in full; it would be too much, and there are technical terms difficult to understand for one who is not acquainted with these matters. I shall only give a few lines, sufficient, however, for those who know the circumspection, reticence, and often the scepticism of doctors, to convince all of this cure. Monsieur du Gourlay, learning of the total blindness of Louis Bourdon, wrote to me thus: “Alas! I can only bitterly regret that the advice I had given was so long forgotten. Before such a misfortune we are utterly incapable of knowing what to do.” Some days later, hearing of the cure, he wrote: “I considered the sight of the right eye gone, seeing the position of the rent. I shall see this lad with all the more pleasure, as I can show the position of the rent, of which certainly marks will be seen.”

‘As soon as Louis had returned to Plancoët to continue his studies, I thought it incumbent on me to bring him to Saint-Brieuc, where M. du Gourlay examined him with joy and surprise, finding distinct marks of the wound. Some months later, when a canonical inquiry became necessary, I presented

myself to M. du Gourlay, accompanied by M. le chanoine Bourgneuf, chaplain to our sisters of Saint-Brieuc, and Reverend Père Ory, postulator of the cause of V. P. Eudes. The doctor assured us that the affection had all the characteristics of sympathetic ophthalmia, with a discharge from the wound; and that he had never seen, heard, or read, that with this disease a sudden cure could take place.

‘Before the episcopal commission of inquiry, M. du Gourlay, after many scientific explanations, concluded in these terms: “I consider the fact of the sudden cure of both eyes, after material injury to the one eye, as quite extraordinary. The fact of sympathetic ophthalmia attacking little by little the left eye, and disappearing all at once, appears to me absolutely miraculous.” M. Sauvage ended his deposition before the ecclesiastical tribunal with this declaration, “The sight of the right eye was irrevocably gone; if the left eye could have been cured, it could only have been done gradually in a longer or a shorter time, and by the means of prolonged remedies. Considering the fact of the cure of the right eye, and the state of the left eye, and on the other hand the simultaneous cure of both eyes, I am convinced that this cure is supernatural.”

‘M. Cuisnier, who was not aware of the loss of the left eye, concluded in these terms: “In strict justice the cure could have been brought about by natural means, and only progressively, and I cannot

comprehend the sudden cure of the right eye, with which alone I was occupied."

'Louis Bourdon's eyes were examined during many hours on the 8th June 1885, by two specialists called by the tribunal of inquiry. After this examination, most carefully made, with all the instruments connected with this science, M. Lecadre concludes: "I see no sign that would make us anticipate the return of the disease, or its change into another form"; and M. Pedrono: "The actual state of the eyes permits me to say that there is nothing to fear with regard to the sight of this boy in future."'

Louis Bourdon continued and achieved his studies without fatigue and with success. His dearest hopes have been realised. He became a priest and a child of V. P. Eudes, and is now labouring in the instruction of young Columbians in the seminary of Pamplona.

After having read this short sketch of the life, labours, foundations, writings, virtues, and miracles of venerable Père Eudes, it may be that we are astonished at the slow progress of the cause of his beatification being brought forward. We have mentioned that it was undertaken in 1868, at the representation of Reverend Père Gaudaire, we may almost say at the initiative of the Sovereign Pontiff himself. In 1853, Père Coubard then receiving a private audience, Pius IX. said to him: 'you belong to the congregation of the Eudists. I am familiar with Père Eudes; I am now reading his life; he

was a great servant of God, a worthy son of the Church: in him science and virtue were united.' And also in 1867 our Holy Father deigned to bless many of the Eudists and said to them: "I well know Père Eudes; he was a great servant of God and of the Church; you must hasten to labour for his canonisation."

Père Gaudaire immediately consulted Mgr. Hugonin, bishop of Bayeux, in whose diocese Père Eudes lived and died, and the information to carry on the cause of his canonisation was undertaken. These long, minute, and wisely conducted procedures cannot be realised by one who is not initiated in these affairs; but, when one takes into consideration all the labour to be undertaken, we are on the contrary, surprised at the perfect regularity, the relative promptitude, with which the present cause has proceeded. The canonisation of St. Francis de Chantal was considered to have progressed rapidly, and the proceedings uninterrupted went on for fifty-two years; while the beatification of Margaret Mary demanded one hundred and fifty years of information and instances. We have had the happiness of being present at Rome, in 1881, at the feasts of four new canonisations. If the cause of St. Labre occupied only ninety years, the others were going on for a hundred, two hundred, and even five hundred years. What is then the way taken in a similar case, and what are the results obtained for Père Eudes?

Mgr. Hugonin began by the constitution of an ecclesiastical tribunal of nine members, over which he often presided himself, and which followed during two years an inquiry on the sanctity, virtues, and miracles in general.

On this subject the tribunal received the depositions of forty-five witnesses during fifty sittings, each lasting at least for three quarters of an hour. This inquiry forms a work of 1200 pages, which it was necessary to transcribe, the copies of which were compared with the original by the tribunal itself. In 1870, this deposit was handed over to the Congregation of Rites, with that of one hundred and forty-four postulatory letters from bishops, or persons elevated to dignities. The canonical rules demand that these acts should remain for ten years in proof before they are touched, but Pius ix., no doubt struck by the number and importance of the postulatory letters, dispensed with these ten years of interval, and permitted the question to be submitted to the Congregation of Rites, which, notwithstanding the objections of the promoter of the faith or devil's advocate, rendered a favourable sentence in 1874, a sentence which received the *Placet* of the Sovereign Pontiff. From that time, we may say our Holy Father was ardently concerned in the favourable issue of this cause, and declared the Père Eudes *Venerable*. But nothing was done for Rome, the cause was simply introduced, taken into consideration, and accepted by the apostolic

authority, which, henceforth will take upon itself all the responsibility. The process of the Ordinary was only informative. The Congregation of Rites then ordained the re-commencement of the inquiry on the renown of sanctity and miracles in general, on the *non-culte*, and to transmit to it all the writings of Père Eudes, even those that were still unpublished. At this new inquiry, at which the bishops were only delegates, there were fifty-six sittings, and ten witnesses were heard, whose depositions form a work of 700 pages. These acts were equally copied and compared; then the objections of the promoter of the faith and the responses of the advocates, united to the summary of these acts, form a volume of 400 pages, which was translated into Italian and printed.

From 1877, the process of '*non-culte*' received a favourable solution, and it was stated that if the faithful and the children of Père Eudes had venerated him, they had never done so officially and publicly, in forestalling, by an indiscreet zeal, the judgment of the Church.

In 1883, Rome pronounced on the writings. If in the scrupulous and profound examination of all the works of Père Eudes, there was found an expression in discord with the teaching of the Church, all hope of canonisation should for ever be renounced. And, nevertheless, how many rocks had not Père Eudes to avoid in his fight against Jansenism, in the institution of his feasts of the Sacred Hearts, and in

the composition of their offices. But his faith was so pure that there was nothing to be found fault with. In the same year the process of *renown of sanctity* also received a favourable sentence.

But these were only the preliminaries of the cause, and the great procedures on the practice of the theological virtues, and on the moral virtues in an heroic degree, on each of the miracles attributed to Père Eudes, were not begun.

At Bayeux, the Sacred Congregation of Rites took information on the *Virtues* during one hundred and seventy-two sittings, whose acts compose four large volumes. They were copied, compared, sent to Rome, translated into Italian. It also prescribed the state of the relics in the church 'la Gloriette,' and in the church of Our Lady of Charity at Caen. The church of the seminary where Père Eudes was interred had been converted into a public library.

M. Caffarelli, prefect of Calvados, in 1810, thought it desirable to translate these remains to the former church of the Jesuits or parish de la Gloriette.

After the study of all these documents, the promoter raised up ninety-one animadversions or observations to which the advocate made his responses in a memoir of 250 pages. This was printed, and some months before the reunion of the tribunal, given up to the twenty-five consultors who are some of its members, all theologians or canonists, chosen by the Supreme Pontiff.

In this reunion or Congregation called *anti-pre-*

paratory, in 1889, the votes on the ‘*heroism of the virtues*’ were also as satisfactory as possible.

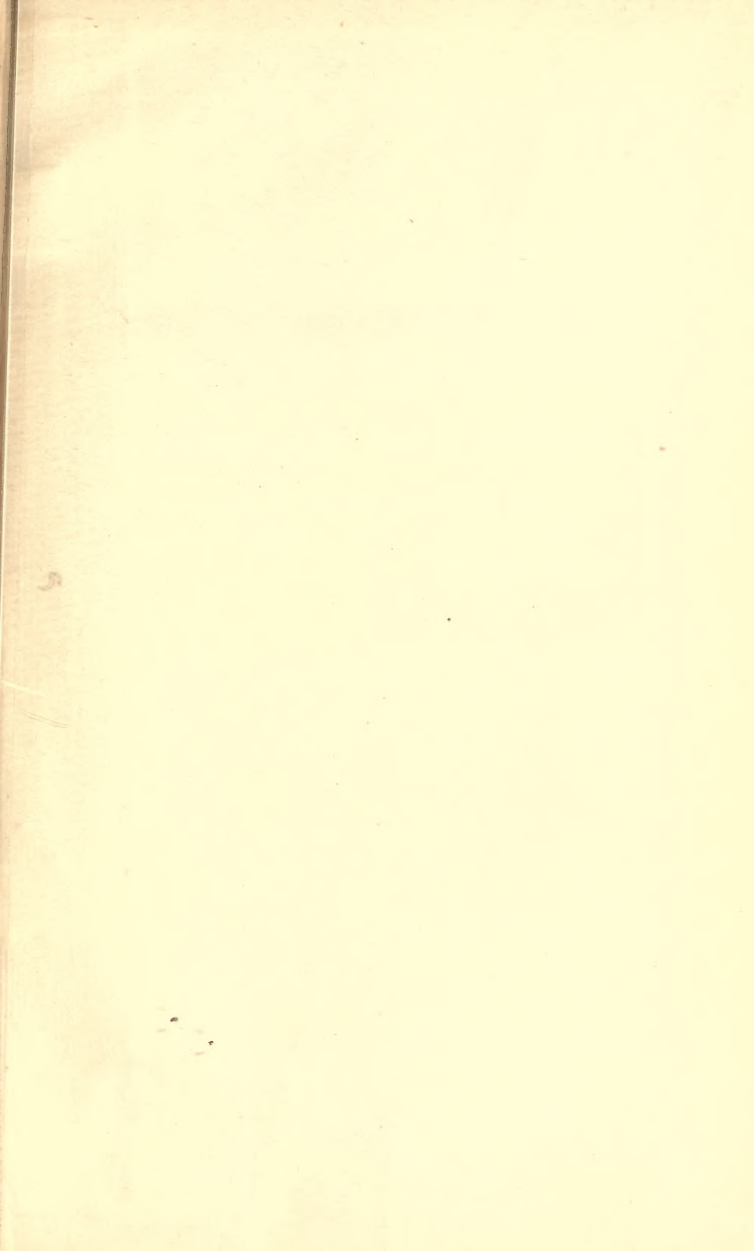
A second Congregation, called *preparatory*, was held in 1900, the solution of which remains in the balance, until more ample information is supplied. But as these sittings are rare, and every year the number of causes is much confined and arranged in advance, a certain delay is to be feared before the bringing on of our cause in the preparatory Congregation. In a third Congregation, called *definitive*, held at the Vatican in presence of the Pope, the Cardinals will give their votes.

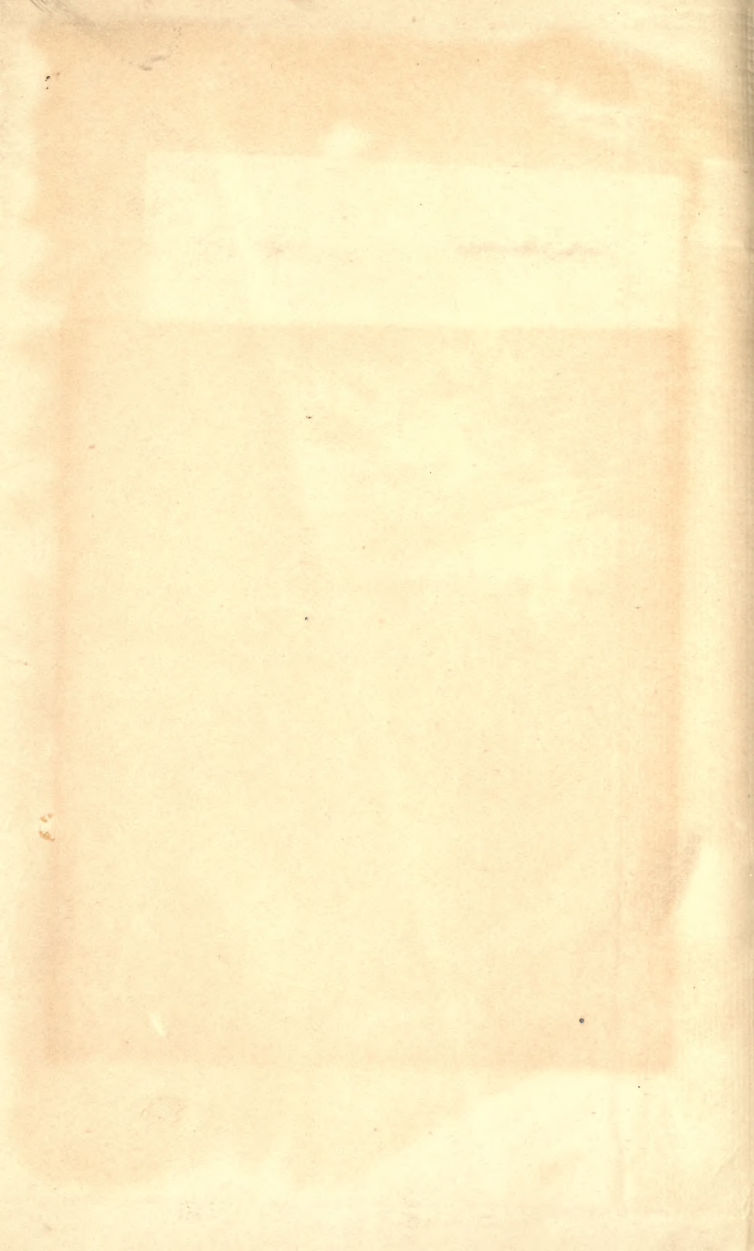
Then will follow the examination of the *Miracles*, which must also pass through the same scrutiny of three Congregations. But we might be tempted to say, From whence come all these formalities and exigencies?

It is because the Church desires, by the example of saints, to reanimate the fervour of the tepid, confound the laxity of the pusillanimous: thus, She will not consent to authorise a public worship to reward common virtues. Happily an eminent charity is not necessary in order to obtain a place in the kingdom of Heaven, but a mediocre state would be insufficient to be marked out for the veneration of the faithful on earth. The Church demands heroism before according public honour.









BX 4700 .E78 P5513 1903 SMC
Pinas, A.

Venerable pere Eudes and his
work, 1601-1901 47231537

AW4-6981

THE REDEMPTORISTS
HOLY REDEEMER COLLEGE
WINDSOR, ONTARIO

